



Arabic Simplified Text

v4.9

أعمال الرسل

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Acts

,Dear Theophilus¹ 1

.In the first book that I wrote for you, I told about many of Jesus' actions and teachings up to the moment when God took Jesus up to heaven. Before **I told you about those things**² Jesus went to heaven, he gave instructions to his chosen Representatives as the Holy Spirit Even though the Romans executed Jesus on a cross, God made him alive³ .guided him and proved to them in **and other disciples** again. Jesus then went to his Representatives many convincing ways that he truly was alive again. He met with them at different times over a period of 40 days. He talked with them about how God would rule the lives of .people everywhere

One time while Jesus was with his disciples, he told them, "I want you to stay here in⁴ the city of Jerusalem and wait until God our Father sends his Spirit to you. As I told you, he John baptized people in water, but within a few days God⁵ .promised that he would do that ".is going to baptize you in the Holy Spirit

,One day when the Representatives were meeting together with Jesus, they asked him⁶ Lord, will you now become our king so that we Israelite people will have our own king" He replied to them, "You do not need to know when that will happen. God⁷ "”?once again

But when the Holy Spirit⁸ ".**when he will make me king** my Father alone has decided comes to you, he will enable you to tell people about me powerfully. You will do this here in the city of Jerusalem. You will do it in the nearby regions of Judea and Samaria. But you while **into heaven** After he said that, he started to rise up⁹ .will also do it all over the world .they watched. But then a cloud blocked their view so that they could no longer see him

While they were still staring toward the sky as Jesus was going up, suddenly two¹⁰ One of the angels¹¹ .angels in human form stood beside them. Their clothes shone brightly !said, "You men who come from Galilee, you do not need to look up at the sky any longer **to** Someday this same Jesus, whom God took from you up into heaven, will come back ".He will return in the same way that you just now saw him go up to heaven .**earth**

the Representatives returned to Jerusalem from the ,**after the two angels left** Then¹² ,After they entered the city¹³ .Mount of Olives, which is a short distance from Jerusalem where they were staying. Those who were **in the house** they went into the upstairs room

.there included Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew
They also included another man named James, who was the son of Alphaeus; Simon the
All these men¹⁴ .Zealot; and Judas, who was the son of yet another man named James
prayed together regularly and frequently. Others who prayed with them included the
women who had traveled with Jesus; Mary, who was Jesus' mother; and his younger
.brothers

,Now about 120 people were meeting together at that place. At one of the meetings¹⁵
.because he was going to say something important Peter stood up among his fellow believers

You who believe as I do, there are words that King David wrote in the¹⁶ ,He said
Scriptures long ago that had to happen as he said they would. The Holy Spirit, who knew
that Judas would show Jesus' enemies where to find him and arrest him, inspired David to
But Jesus had chosen Judas, along with the rest of us, to represent¹⁷ .write those words
".So we need to find someone else to take his place .him

.This is how Judas died. The Jewish leaders gave Judas money for betraying Jesus¹⁸
and he went to that field to kill himself because he felt so He used that money to buy a field
He fell down onto that field from a high place and .badly about what he had done to Jesus
.landed with such force that his abdomen burst open, and all his intestines spilled out
The news about this spread widely among the people of Jerusalem. When they heard¹⁹
,about it, they gave that field a new name. In their Aramaic language it was Akeldama
They gave it that name because it was where someone had ".which means "Field of Blood
.died

:Peter also said, "What happened to Judas is like what we read in the book of Psalms²⁰
May his home become empty, with no one living in it.' These other words in the Psalms'
""also refer to him: 'Let someone else take over his work as a leader

So we need to identify all the men who were with us during the whole time when²¹
from the time when John the They need to have been with us²² .the Lord Jesus was with us
Baptizer began his work until the day when Jesus left us and rose up to heaven. One such
join us in telling people about Jesus and how God caused him replace Judas and man must
".to live again after he died

So the people who were meeting together suggested two men who could replace²³
Judas. One man was Joseph the son of Sabbas, who also had the name Justus. The other
Then they prayed: "Lord Jesus, Judas stopped representing you as²⁴⁻²⁵ .man was Matthias
he should have. He has now gone to the place where he deserves to be. You know what
every person thinks privately. So please show us which of these two men you have chosen
Then they cast lots to choose²⁶ ".to take the place of Judas as your Representative

between the two of them. The lot indicated that Matthias was the one to replace Judas. So
.he became a Representative along with the 11 others

On the day when the Jews were celebrating the Pentecost festival, the believers¹ 2

Suddenly, they heard a noise² .in the city of Jerusalem were all together in one place
coming from the sky that sounded like a wind blowing loudly. Everyone in the entire house
.Then they saw what looked like burning flames³ .where they were sitting heard the noise
Then⁴ .These flames separated from one another and came to rest on each of the believers
the Holy Spirit empowered all of the believers. They began to speak in languages they had
.never learned. The Spirit was making it possible for them to do that fluently

.to celebrate the Pentecost festival At that time many Jews were staying in Jerusalem⁵

They were Jewish people who sincerely worshiped God. They had come from many
of When they heard this loud noise, a large crowd⁶ .different countries around the world
The people in the crowd were .at the place where the believers were gathered these Jews
They⁷ .amazed because they were each hearing the believers speak in their own languages
were all completely amazed, and they said to each other, “Listen, all these people who are
But all of⁸ !So they cannot possibly know our languages .speaking have come from Galilee
Some of us are people from the regions⁹ !us hear them speaking our own native languages
,of Parthia and Media and Elam. Others of us are from the regions of Mesopotamia, Judea
There are some people here from the regions of Phrygia¹⁰ .Cappadocia, Pontus, and Asia
and Pamphylia, from the country of Egypt, and from the regions in Libya that are near the
They¹¹ .city of Cyrene. There are others of us who are here visiting Jerusalem from Rome
include native Jews as well as non-Jews who have chosen to believe and practice what Jews
believe. And others of us are from the island of Crete and from the region of Arabia. And
yet we can hear these people speaking in all our different languages about the mighty works
and did not know about what was happening The people wondered¹² ”!that God has done
But some¹³ ”?So they asked one another, “What is happening here .about it what to think
These people are talking like this because“,of them made fun of what they saw. They said
”!they have drunk too much wine

In response, Peter stood up with all the other Representatives and spoke loudly to¹⁴
the crowd of people. He said, “You Jewish people and all of you others who live here in
Some of you think¹⁵ !Jerusalem, listen to me and I will explain to you what is happening
and people ,that we are drunk, but we are not drunk. It is only nine o’clock in the morning
Instead, what has happened to us is the¹⁶ !here never get drunk at this time of the day
:He wrote .long ago thing that the prophet Joel wrote about miraculous

.During the last days,' God says, 'I will give my Holy Spirit to all kinds of people'¹⁷
,Your sons and daughters will tell people my messages. I will give visions to the young men
During those days I will give my Holy¹⁸ .and I will give inspired dreams to the old men
I will¹⁹ .Spirit to my servants, both men and women, so they can tell people my messages
cause things to happen in the sky that will make people marvel. I will cause things to
happen on the earth that will show that great events are going to take place. Here on the
In the sky the sun will appear²⁰ .earth there will be blood, fire, and smoke everywhere
dark to people and the moon will appear red to them. Those things will happen before the
But even though I am²¹ .momentous time when I, the Lord God, come to judge everyone
coming to judge and punish sin, I will save all those who repent and ask me to forgive their
""sins

You Israelites, listen to me! When Jesus from“ ,Peter continued speaking. He said²²
Nazareth lived among you, God proved to you that he had sent him by enabling him to do
many amazing miracles. These showed that he was from God. You yourselves know that
Even though you knew that, you urged people who do not obey God's law to²³ .this is true
take action to kill Jesus. They did that by nailing him to a cross. However, God had already
.planned for that to happen, and he knew what the results would be, so he allowed it
Jesus died, but God caused him to become alive again and no longer dead, because it²⁴
.was not possible for him to stay dead

:Long ago King David wrote what the Messiah said²⁵

I knew that you, Lord God, would always be there to protect me. You are right beside'
,Because of that, I am happy²⁶ .me, so I will not be afraid of those who want to harm me
that you will cause me to and I joyfully praise you, O God. And I am completely confident
I am confident because I know that you will not make me²⁷ .become alive again after I die
remain in the place where the dead are. You will not even let my body waste away, because
You have shown me how to live again. You²⁸ .you have chosen me for a special purpose
""forever will make me very happy because you will be with me

You who are Jews like me, I can tell you confidently that our“ ,Peter continued²⁹
ancient ruler, King David, died and that his subjects buried him. In fact, his body is still
So we know that King David was not³⁰ .here now at the place where they buried him
talking about himself in this psalm. Instead, he was a prophet, and he knew that God
A long time³¹ .promised to him that one of his descendants would become king after him
ago, David knew what God would do. He said that God would cause Jesus the Messiah to
live again after he died. God would not allow him to remain in a grave. God would not
.even let him be dead long enough for his body to begin to decompose

After this man Jesus had died, God made him alive again. All of us who are standing³²
So we are not³³ .We all saw him alive after he had died .here before you can testify to this
babbling drunkenly. Instead, this is what has happened. God has greatly honored Jesus by
causing Jesus to rule where God himself is, in heaven. Jesus has received the Holy Spirit
from God his Father, just as God promised. And now Jesus has generously given us the
.Holy Spirit, and God has confirmed that gift by doing this miracle that you are witnessing
We know that David was not speaking about himself, because David did not go up into³⁴
:Besides that, David himself said this about the Messiah .as Jesus did heaven

The Lord God said to my Lord the Messiah, “I will honor you by giving you a position‘
””””.while I completely defeat your enemies³⁵ next to me

So I want every Israelite to know definitely that God has“ ,Peter ended by saying³⁶
made Jesus both Lord and Messiah, this same Jesus whom you had nailed to a cross and
”.killed

When the people heard what Peter said, they knew they had done wrong. The people³⁷
””?asked him and the other Representatives, “Can you men tell us what God wants us to do

Peter answered them, “Each of you should turn away from your sinful behavior. If³⁸
 ,you now believe in what Jesus, the Messiah, has done for you, we will baptize you
You will³⁹ .showing that God has forgiven your sins, and he will give you his Holy Spirit
receive the Holy Spirit because God has promised to give him to you and to your children
and to all others whom the God we worship leads to have faith in Jesus. That includes all
Peter said many more things and spoke strongly to⁴⁰ ”.those who live far away from here
them. He told them, “Ask God to save you so that he will not punish you when he punishes
”!who have rejected Jesus these evil people

So the people who believed Peter’s message received baptism. There were about⁴¹
They continually obeyed what⁴² .of them who joined the group of believers that day 3,000
the Representatives taught. They met many times together with the other believers, and
.they ate a meal and prayed together every day

Throughout Jerusalem people came to have a great awe for God, because the⁴³
All of those who believed⁴⁴ .Representatives were doing many kinds of miraculous deeds
.in Jesus met regularly together. They also kept sharing what they had with one another
From time to time some of them sold some of their land and some of the other things⁴⁵
that they owned. They did this so that they could give some of the money they made to
Every day they kept⁴⁶ .other believers. They gave those believers as much as they needed
gathering to worship together in the temple courtyard, and then they would have meals

As they⁴⁷ .together in their homes. They ate together happily and with genuine affection did so, they kept praising God, and the other people who lived in Jerusalem greatly every day the Lord Jesus saved more ,**As those things were happening** .respected them .people and those people joined with the other believers

One day Peter and John were going to the temple to pray. It was three o'clock in¹ **3**

There was a man there who had not² .the afternoon, the time when people prayed there been able to walk from the time he was born. He was sitting by the Beautiful Gate at the entrance to the temple area. People carried him there every day so that he could ask those .who were going into the temple area to give him some money

As Peter and John were approaching that gate, he saw them and asked them to give³

When they heard the man speak to them, Peter and John looked⁴ .him some money

,So he looked directly at them⁵ ”!directly at him, and Peter said to him, “Look at us

Then Peter said to him, “I do not have any⁶ .expecting to get some money from them ,money, but I will do what I can do for you. I heal you by the power of Jesus the Messiah

Then Peter grasped⁷ ”!that man who came from the city of Nazareth. So get up and walk the man’s right hand and helped him to stand up. The man realized immediately that his

the So the man jumped⁸ .feet and ankles were going to be strong enough to support him and started walking! He went into the temple area with Peter **by himself up rest of the way**

!and John, leaping for joy and praising God as he walked

.All the people who were there saw him walking and heard him praising God⁹

They recognized that he was the man who used to sit at the Beautiful Gate that led into¹⁰ the temple area and ask people for money! So all the people there were greatly amazed that

The man would not let go of Peter and John. The three of them were¹¹ .he could now walk

As the amazing news of the .**a covered walkway within the temple area** ,in Solomon’s Porch man’s healing spread through the crowd, more and more people came running over to see .them

,When Peter saw that a crowd was gathering around them, he said to the people¹²

You Israelites, it should not surprise you that this man can now walk. But you should not“

Let¹³ !be looking at us as if we were so godly that we made him walk by our own power .God made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob .**me tell you what has really happened**

We Israelites are descendants of those men, so the covenant includes us. God honored that **We told this man that the power of Jesus could** .covenant by sending Jesus to be the Messiah God has now glorified Jesus by doing this miracle. But when Jesus was living **heal him, and knew** ,among us, you turned him over to the Romans for trial. Pilate, the Roman governor

wanted to set him free. But you gathered in front of Pilate and **that Jesus was innocent and**
 ,Rather than have Pilate release Jesus to you¹⁴ .shouted that he should not release him
 even though Jesus was the Messiah, you rejected him and asked Pilate to set free a killer
 So you are responsible for the death of Jesus, the one who gives people life. But¹⁵ !instead
 God brought him back to life after he died. We can testify that we saw Jesus many times
 He is .You recognize this man whom you see standing here¹⁶ .after he became alive again
 He is now strong enough to stand on **.the man who used to beg for alms at the Beautiful Gate**
 his own because he believed in what Jesus could do. Yes, it is because he trusted in Jesus
 .that he is now completely healthy. All of you saw this happen

Now, my countrymen, I know that you and your leaders killed Jesus because you did¹⁷
 God said through the prophets ahead of time that the¹⁸ .not know that he was the Messiah
 Messiah he would send would suffer and die. And now, by what has happened, he has
 So stop living sinful lives and ask God to help you do¹⁹ .fulfilled what the prophets said
 If you²⁰ .what pleases him. Then God will completely forgive you for sinning against him
 do that, there will be times when you will know that the Lord God is helping you. And
 some day he will send back to earth the Messiah whom he has given to you. That person is
 Jesus will certainly stay in heaven until the time when God causes all that he²¹ .Jesus
 created to become new. Long ago God promised to do that, and he chose holy prophets to
 The‘ :**about the Messiah** Moses said this **the prophet** ,For example²² .tell that to people
 Lord our God will make one of you Israelites a prophet like me. You must do everything he
 Those who do not do what that prophet tells them will no longer belong²³ .tells you to do
 In fact, all the prophets have“ ,**Peter continued**²⁴ ”.to God’s people. God will destroy them
 told about what would happen during the times we are now living in. Those prophets
 include Samuel and the ones who lived after him, who all spoke about these events before
 What the prophets said long ago applies to you today. And the solemn²⁵ .they happened
 agreement that God made to bless our ancestors also extends to you, their descendants. He
 I will bless all the people groups on the earth as a‘ ,**about the Messiah** said to Abraham
 So when God sent Jesus to the earth as the²⁶ ’.result of what your descendant will do
 Messiah, he had him come to you Israelites first. God intended for the Messiah to bless you
 ”.by getting you to stop doing things that were wrong

While Peter and John were still speaking to the people, several men walked up¹ **4**
 and confronted them. They included priests who served in the temple, the officer in charge
 These men were very² .of the temple guard, and some members of the Sadducee group
 angry because these two men were teaching the people. They were telling the people that
 So³ .what God did for Jesus shows that God causes people to live again after they die

these men arrested Peter and John and put them in jail. They did this because it was already evening, and the Jewish council would have to wait until the next day to question them. However, many people who had heard Peter speak put their faith in Jesus. The number of⁴ men who believed in Jesus increased to about 5,000

The next day the high priest called the other chief priests, the teachers of the Jewish⁵ laws, and the other members of the Jewish council. They all assembled in one place in Annas, the former high priest, was there. Caiaphas, the new high priest, was⁶ Jerusalem also there. And so were John and Alexander and other men who were related to the high priest. They commanded guards to bring Peter and John into the room, and then they⁷ .priest”asked Peter and John, “Who gave you the right or the ability to do this

As the Holy Spirit gave him power, Peter said to them in response, “You fellow⁸ Today you are questioning us⁹ !Israelites who rule us and all of you elders, listen to me about a good deed we did for a man who could not walk. You want to know how he became So we want this whole council and all the other Israelites to know what¹⁰ .able to walk has happened. This man is able to stand before you because Jesus from Nazareth, the Messiah, healed him. You were responsible for the Romans executing Jesus by nailing him .to a cross. But God brought Jesus back to life after they executed him ,Jesus the Messiah of Nazareth is the one of whom the Scriptures say¹¹

The stone that the builders threw away has become the most important stone in the‘ .building

So you should no longer reject¹² .because you rejected Jesus ,And you are those builders only Jesus can save us. For God has given us no other person in the world who **him, because** ”!**from the guilt of our sins** can save us

The Jewish leaders recognized that Peter and John were not afraid of them. They¹³ also realized that these two men were ordinary people who had not studied in schools. So They¹⁴ .the leaders were amazed. They knew that these men had spent time with Jesus .also saw the man who had become able to walk again standing there with Peter and John .So they were not able to say anything to contradict them

The Jewish leaders told guards to take Peter, John, and this man outside of the room¹⁵ **about Peter** where they were meeting. After they did so, the leaders talked with each other They said, “There is nothing that we can do to punish these two men! The¹⁶ .**and John** news of the amazing miracle that they have done has spread widely in Jerusalem. So we However, we must not allow any more people¹⁷ !cannot tell people that it did not happen

to hear what they have been teaching about this Jesus. So we must tell these men that we will punish them if they continue to tell other people about the one who they say gave them So the Jewish leaders told the guards to bring them into the¹⁸ ”.the power to heal this man room again. After the guards had done so, they told them both that they were completely .forbidden to speak or teach about Jesus

But Peter and John told them in response, “In order to obey your command, we¹⁹ We will let you .who commanded us to tell everyone about Jesus ,would have to disobey God ,But as for us²⁰ .decide whether you think God would want us to obey you instead of him we cannot obey you. We will not stop telling people about what we saw Jesus do and what ”.we heard him teach

Then the Jewish leaders again told Peter and John not to disobey them. But then²¹ they let them go without punishing them. The leaders knew that throughout Jerusalem to the man who could not walk, and they people were praising God for what had happened this was a The people were praising God because²² .did not want to upset the people The man whom Peter and John had healed by doing this miracle was .remarkable miracle .and he had never before walked in his life ,over forty years old

After Peter and John left the council, they met with the others who believed in Jesus²³ When²⁴ .and told them everything that the people on the ruling council had said to them !the others who believed in Jesus heard this, they prayed together aloud to God, “O Lord Your Holy Spirit²⁵ .You made the sky, the earth, the oceans, and everything in them :caused our ancestor, King David, who served you, to write these words

Why did the people groups of the world become angry‘
?against God and why did they plan uselessly
The kings in the world prepared to fight²⁶
and the rulers joined with them
,to oppose the Lord God and the one whom he had chosen to be the Messiah

What David said is true! Both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with people who²⁷ were Israelites and people who were not, joined together in this city of Jerusalem to oppose ,Jesus. They opposed him even though he had done nothing wrong and even though you they did no more than ,But when they opposed Jesus²⁸ .God, had sent him as the Messiah ,So now²⁹ .you allowed because it was what you had decided long ago would happen Lord, listen to what they are saying about how they will punish us! Help us who serve you Use your power to do great healings³⁰ !to speak about Jesus without being afraid at all

and many other miraculous deeds that will show the authority you have given to Jesus, your
”!chosen Messiah

When the believers had finished praying, the place where they were meeting started³¹
to shake. The Holy Spirit gave them all power to tell people about Jesus as God had
.commanded, and they did that with great courage

Those in the group of people who believed in Jesus were in complete agreement³²
about what they believed and what they wanted. Not one of them said that he was the sole
The³³ .owner of anything. Instead, they shared what they had with one another
Representatives continued to preach powerfully that God had caused the Lord Jesus to live
Here is one way³⁴ .again after he died. And God was helping all the believers very much
God was helping them. No one among the believers was lacking anything. This was
because other believers who owned fields or houses would sell some of their property to
and they would give it to the³⁵ help them. They would bring the proceeds from the sale
.Representatives, who would then give out the money to the believers who needed it

Now there was a man named Joseph who belonged to the tribe of Levi and who³⁶
came from the island of Cyprus. The Representatives called him Barnabas. In the language
Barnabas sold a³⁷ .of the Jews, that name means a person who always encourages others
for them to give field that belonged to him, and he brought the money to the Representatives
.to other believers

,Now there was one of the believers whose name was Ananias. He was married¹ 5
He kept for himself some² .and his wife’s name was Sapphira. They also sold some land
of the money he had received for the land. His wife knew that he had done that. Then he
.brought the rest of the money and gave it to the Representatives

Then Peter said, “Ananias, you have allowed Satan to control you so completely that³
you tried to deceive the Holy Spirit. You kept for yourself some of the money you received
Before you sold that land, you truly owned⁴ .You did not give us all of it .for selling the land
it. And after you sold it, the money was still yours. So you should never have thought about
doing such a wicked thing. You were not just trying to deceive people! No, you were trying
When Ananias heard the things Peter told him, he immediately⁵ ”!to deceive God himself
.felt a great awe for God about Ananias’ death fell down dead. And everyone who learned
When Ananias died, some young men came forward, wrapped his body in a sheet, and⁶
.carried it out and buried it

About three hours later, his wife came in. But she did not know that Peter confronted⁷ Then⁸ .her husband about the lie they had told and that her husband had died as a result Peter showed her the money that Ananias had brought and asked her, “Tell me, is this the amount of money you two received for the land you sold?” She said, “Yes, that is what we So Peter said to her, “You both did a terrible thing when you agreed to try to⁹ ”.received **God struck your** .deceive the Holy Spirit! This is what will happen to you as a result .some young men are just coming back from burying him **husband dead as a punishment and** ”.God is also going to strike you dead, and they will take your body out and bury it as well Immediately Sapphira fell down dead right in front of Peter. Just then the young men¹⁰ came back in. When they saw that she had also died, they carried her body out and buried it .next to her husband’s body

All the believers in Jerusalem felt a great awe for God because of what had¹¹ happened to Ananias and Sapphira. Everyone else who heard about these things also felt .great awe for God

that showed the God was enabling the Representatives to do many amazing miracles¹² among the people. All the believers were meeting together **truth of what they were preaching** All of the other¹³ .regularly in the temple courtyard at the place called Solomon’s Porch ,people who had not believed in Jesus were afraid to meet with the believers. However Many more men and women¹⁴ .those people continued to speak very highly of them Because the¹⁵ .started believing in the Lord Jesus, and they joined the group of believers people were seeing such amazing miracles, they started bringing those who had various diseases right into the streets and placing them on stretchers and mattresses there. They were hoping that when Peter walked by his shadow might touch some of them, because if Large crowds of people were also coming¹⁶ .even that happened, God would heal them from the towns near Jerusalem. They were bringing those who had various diseases and .those whom evil spirits were tormenting, and God healed all of them

that such large crowds were coming to However, the high priest became very resentful¹⁷ Many priests who were members of the Sadducee group were also very .**the Representatives** So¹⁸ .resentful of them. They joined together with the high priest to work against them The¹⁹ .they commanded the temple guards to arrest them and to put them in the public jail **high priest and his allies kept them in jail overnight so that they could question them in the** But that night an angel from the Lord God opened the jail doors and led all the .**morning** Go to the temple courtyard, stand“²⁰ ,Representatives outside. Then the angel told them there, and tell the people about the eternal life that Jesus can give them. Do not leave ”.anything out, even though the Sanhedrin has commanded you not to say certain things So when the Representatives heard what the angel said, they went to the temple²¹

.courtyard and began to teach the people once more about Jesus. By then it was about dawn
Around that same time, the high priest and the other priests who were working with him
gathered together in the Jewish council chamber. From there they summoned the other
council members. Together they were all the leaders of Israel. Once the whole council was

But when the guards²² .present, they sent guards to the jail to get the Representatives
arrived at the jail, they discovered that they were not there. So they returned to the council

We saw that the jail doors were very safely locked and that the²³ ,and told the members
and went in guards were keeping watch in front of the doors. But when we opened the doors

When the chief priests and the²⁴ ”.none of them were inside the jail ,to get those men
officer in charge of the temple guards heard that, they were greatly confused. They
.wondered what the consequences would be

Then someone came and reported to them, “Listen to this! The men you put in jail²⁵
have somehow gotten into the temple courtyard. And they are telling the people there about

So the officer in charge of the temple guards went to the temple courtyard with²⁶ ”!Jesus

But they did not .to the council room the officers. They brought the Representatives back
treat them roughly. They were afraid that if they did that, the people would try to kill them
.by throwing stones at them

After the captain and his officers had brought the Representatives to the council²⁷
room, they commanded them to stand in front of the council members. Then the high priest

He said to them, “We ordered you very clearly not to teach²⁸ .questioned them intensely
people about that man Jesus! But you have disobeyed us, and you have taught people all
over Jerusalem about him! Furthermore, you are trying to make it seem that we are the ones

But Peter, speaking for himself and the other²⁹ ”!who are guilty of that man’s death
Representatives, replied, “We have to obey what God commands us to do, not what you

You are the ones who killed Jesus by nailing him to a cross! But³⁰ !people tell us to do
God has³¹ .God, whom our ancestors worshiped, caused Jesus to live again after he died
honored Jesus more than he has honored anyone else. He has made him the one to save us
and rule over us. He has enabled us Israelites to stop sinning and he has forgiven us for the

We tell people about these things that we saw happen to Jesus. The³² .sins we committed
Holy Spirit, whom God has sent to us who obey him, is also confirming that these things

with the When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they became so angry³³ ”.are true
.that they wanted to kill them Representatives

But there was a council member named Gamaliel. He was a member of the Pharisee³⁴
group. He taught the Jewish laws, and the Jewish people respected him highly. He stood up
in the council and told the guards to take the Representatives out of the room for a short
,Gamaliel said to the other council members ,After the guards had taken them out³⁵ .time

You leaders of the people of Israel, you must think carefully about what you are going to“

Some years ago a man named Theudas led a revolt against the³⁶ .do to these men government. He claimed that he was a great man, and about 400 men joined him. But the Romans captured and executed him, and all those who had joined him went back to where

After that, during the time when the³⁷ .they came from. So this revolt did not succeed Romans were recording the names of people in order to tax them, a man named Judas from the region of Galilee rebelled. He convinced some people to rebel with him. But he too

Based on these³⁸ .died, and all those who had joined him went off in different directions examples, let me offer some advice. Do not kill these men! Set them free! I say this because if the things that are happening now are just something that humans have planned, someone

But if God has commanded them to do these things, you³⁹ .will stop them. They will fail ”!will not be able to stop them. You may even discover that you are working against God

They told the temple⁴⁰ .The other members of the council accepted what Gamaliel said

So the guards brought them into the .guards to bring in the Representatives and beat them

Then the council members commanded them not to speak to .council room and beat them .people about Jesus any more, and they let them go

So they left the council chamber. As they did, they even rejoiced that God had⁴¹ .honored them by allowing people to treat them badly because they were testifying to Jesus

Every day after that, they went to the temple area and to various people’s houses, and⁴² .they continued teaching people and telling them that Jesus is the Messiah

-During that time, many more people were becoming believers. The Greek¹ 6 speaking Jews began to complain about the Aramaic-speaking Jews because the widows .among them were not receiving their fair share of food every day

summoned all had heard what they were saying, they Jesus’ 12 representatives after So² to meet together. Then they said to them, “We would not be in Jerusalem the other believers doing the right thing if we stopped telling people the message God told us to share about So, fellow believers, carefully choose seven³ !Jesus in order to distribute food to people men from among you, men whom you know the Spirit of God directs and who are very As for us, we will keep on using our⁴ .wise. Then we will instruct them to do this work ”.time to pray and to proclaim the news about Jesus

All of the disciples liked their suggestion. So they chose Stephen, a man who strongly⁵ ,believed in God and whom the Holy Spirit controlled completely. They also chose Philip .Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, who was from the city of Antioch

The believers⁶ .Nicolas was a former Gentile who had converted to the Jewish religion ,brought these seven men to the Representatives, who prayed for those men. As they prayed

they placed their hands on the men's heads to show that they approved of them to do that
.work

More and more people were hearing the news about Jesus. The number of people in⁷
Jerusalem who believed in Jesus was increasing greatly. Among them were very many
Jewish priests. They put their trust in Jesus as the Messiah and so they began to live in the
.way he said they should

that God was giving Stephen power to do many amazing miracles among the people⁸
.However, some people opposed Stephen⁹ .showed that the message about Jesus was true
.They were Jews who attended a synagogue that had the name Freedmen's Synagogue
Some other Jews also opposed Stephen. They were from the synagogues that people
attended who were from the cities of Cyrene and Alexandria and from the provinces of
But they were not able to prove¹⁰ .Cilicia and Asia. They all began to argue with Stephen
.that what he said was wrong, because God's Spirit enabled him to speak very wisely

,So they secretly persuaded some men to accuse Stephen falsely. Those men said¹¹
They also made the other Jewish¹² ".We heard him say bad things about Moses and God"
people angry at Stephen, including the elders and the teachers of the Jewish laws. They
They also¹³ .came up to Stephen, grabbed him, and took him to the Jewish council
brought in some people who told lies about Stephen. They said, "This man keeps saying
.bad things about this holy temple and about the laws that Moses received from God
What we mean is that we have heard him say that this Jesus from the town of Nazareth¹⁴
will destroy the temple here in Jerusalem and will tell us to obey different customs from the
".ones that Moses taught our ancestors

All the people in the council room stared at Stephen and saw that his face resembled¹⁵
.the face of an angel

Then the high priest asked Stephen, "Are the things that these people are saying¹ 7

Stephen replied, "Fellow Jews and respected leaders, please listen to² "?about you true
me! The glorious God whom we worship appeared to our forefather Abraham while he was
God said³ .still living in the region of Mesopotamia, before he moved to the city of Haran
to him, 'Leave this land where you and your relatives are living and go into the land to
So Abraham left that land, which was also called Chaldea, and⁴ '.which I will direct you
he arrived in Haran and lived there. After his father died, God told him to move to this land
.where our people are now living

At that time God did not give Abraham any land to own here, not even a small plot of⁵, this land. But God promised that later he would give this land to him and his descendants and that it would always belong to them. However, at that time Abraham did not have any .children who would inherit it

.Later God told Abraham, ‘Your descendants will go and live in a foreign country’⁶ They will live there for four hundred years. During that time, the rulers will mistreat your But I will punish the people who make⁷ .descendants and force them to work as slaves them work as slaves,’ said God. ‘After that, your descendants will leave that land, and they .will come and worship me in this land

Then God commanded that every male in Abraham’s household and all of his male⁸ descendants should be circumcised to show that they all belonged to God. Later Abraham’s son, Isaac, was born, and when Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him. Later Isaac had a son named Jacob. Jacob was the father of the 12 men whom we Jews call the .patriarchs, our forefathers

You know that Jacob’s older sons became jealous because their father favored their⁹ younger brother Joseph. So they sold him to merchants who took him to Egypt, where he God protected him whenever people¹⁰ .became a slave. But God took care of Joseph caused him to suffer. He enabled Joseph to be wise, and he caused Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to think well of Joseph. So Pharaoh appointed him to rule over Egypt and to look .after all of Pharaoh’s property

there was a time when there was very little food ,While Joseph was doing that work¹¹ anywhere in Egypt and also in Canaan. People were suffering badly. At that time Jacob and

When Jacob heard a report that¹² .his sons in Canaan could not find enough food to eat there was grain in Egypt that people could buy, he sent Joseph’s older brothers there to buy They went and bought grain from Joseph, but they did not recognize him. Then they .grain

When Joseph’s brothers went to Egypt again, they bought grain from¹³ .returned home Joseph once more. But this time he told them who he was. And so Pharaoh found out that Joseph sent his brothers¹⁴ .these men who had come from Canaan were Joseph’s brothers back home to tell their father Jacob that Joseph wanted him and his entire family to come to So when Jacob heard that, he¹⁵ .Egypt. At that time Jacob’s family consisted of 75 people ,Jacob died there, and our other ancestors ,Later on .and all his family went to live in Egypt

Their descendants brought their bodies back to our land and¹⁶ .his sons, also died there .buried them in the tomb that Abraham bought from Hamor’s sons in the city of Shechem

Our ancestors had become very numerous by the time God was about to rescue them¹⁷

Another king had¹⁸ .from Egypt. That is what God had promised Abraham he would do begun to rule in Egypt. He did not know that Joseph had greatly helped the people of Egypt

That king tried to get rid of our ancestors in cruel ways. He¹⁹ .long before his own time oppressed them and caused them to suffer greatly. He even commanded them to abandon .their newborn babies outside their homes so that the babies would die

.During that time Moses was born, and God saw that he was a very beautiful child²⁰

Then they had to²¹ .His parents secretly cared for him in their house for three months abandon him outside the house. But Pharaoh's daughter found him and cared for him as her

The Egyptians taught Moses the many things that they had learned. When he²² .own son .grew up, he spoke and did things powerfully

,One day when Moses was about forty years old, he decided to see how his relatives²³

.He saw an Egyptian mistreating one of the Israelites²⁴ .the people of Israel, were doing .So he went over to help the Israelite man. He avenged him by killing the Egyptian

Moses expected that his fellow Israelites would understand that God had sent him to²⁵

The next day, Moses saw two²⁶ .free them from being slaves. But they did not understand ,of his fellow Israelites fighting each other. He tried to make them stop by saying to them

But the man who²⁷ '!'Now you two are both Israelites! You must stop hurting each other' was injuring the other man pushed Moses away. He said to him, 'You have no authority

When²⁹ '!'You probably want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday²⁸ !over us

.Moses heard that, he fled from Egypt to the land of Midian. He lived there for some years .had two sons and his wife he He got married, and

One day forty years later, the Lord God came to Moses in the form of an angel. This³⁰

.was in the desert near Mount Sinai. He appeared in the flames of a bush that was on fire

When Moses saw it, he was amazed because the bush was not burning up. As he went³¹

I am the God whom your³² ,over to look more closely, he heard the Lord God say to him ancestors worshiped. I am the God whom Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob worship.' Moses was

Then the³³ .so afraid that he began to shake. He was afraid to look at the bush any longer

Lord God said to him, 'Take your sandals off to show that you honor me. Because I am

I have seen clearly how the³⁴ .here, the place where you are standing is especially mine people of Egypt are continually causing my people to suffer. I have heard my people when ,they groan because of it. So I am taking action to rescue them from Egypt. Now get ready

' .because I am going to send you back to Egypt

This Moses is the one who had tried to help our Israelite people. But they rejected³⁵ him by saying, ‘You have no authority over us!’ Moses is the one whom God himself sent to rule them and to free them from being slaves. He did that with the help of the angel who Moses is the one who led our ancestors out from Egypt. He³⁶ spoke to him from the bush did many kinds of miracles in Egypt, at the Sea of Reeds, and during the forty years that the This Moses is the one who said to the Israelite³⁷ .Israelite people lived in the wilderness people, ‘God will cause another man from among your own people to be a prophet like me It was this man Moses who was among the Israelites who were together in the³⁸ ’.for you wilderness. God spoke through the angel on Mount Sinai to give Moses our laws. Moses was the one who told our ancestors what the angel had said. He was the one to whom God gave commandments and who passed them on to us. Those commandments are still .powerful today

However, our ancestors did not want to obey Moses. Instead, they rejected him as³⁹ So they told his older brother Aaron, ‘Make⁴⁰ .their leader and wanted to return to Egypt idols for us who will be our gods to lead us. As for that fellow Moses who led us out of ,When the Israelites rejected Moses⁴¹ ’!Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him .they made an image that looked like a calf. Then they offered sacrifices to honor that idol So God⁴² .They sang and danced to worship something that they themselves had made stopped correcting them. He left them to worship the stars in the sky. This agrees with what :one of the prophets wrote

God said, ‘You Israelite people repeatedly killed animals and offered them to me with grain as sacrifices during those forty years that you were in the wilderness. But you !certainly were not truly offering them to me

On the contrary, you carried with you the tent that contained the idol representing⁴³ the god Molech that you worshiped. You also carried with you the image of the star called Rephan. Those were idols that you had made, and you worshiped them instead of me. So I will cause you to be taken away far from your homes to regions even farther ’.than the country of Babylon

While our ancestors were in the desert, they worshiped God at the sacred tent that⁴⁴ showed that he was there with them. They had made the tent exactly like God had commanded Moses to make it. It was exactly like the model that Moses had seen when he Later on, other ancestors of ours carried that tent with them⁴⁵ .was up on the mountain when Joshua led them into this land. That was during the time when they took this land for themselves, when God forced the people who previously lived here to leave. So the Israelites were able to possess this land. The tent remained in this land and was still here David pleased God, and he asked God to let him build a temple⁴⁶ .when King David ruled

But instead, God told⁴⁷ .where he and all of our Israelite people could worship God
.David's son Solomon to build a temple where people could worship him

However, we know that God, who is greater than everything, does not live in⁴⁸
:temples that people build. It is as the prophet Isaiah wrote

God said, 'I created everything in heaven and on earth. My presence fills all of'⁴⁹⁻⁵⁰
'!creation. So you human beings cannot make a place good enough for me to live in

You people are disobedient to God, as if you did not even know God! You are⁵¹
Your⁵² !exactly like your ancestors! You always resist the Holy Spirit, just as they did
ancestors caused every prophet to suffer. They even killed those who long ago announced
that the Messiah would come, the one who always did what pleased God. And the Messiah
has come! He is the one whom you recently turned over to his enemies and insisted that
You are the people who have received God's laws. Those were laws that⁵³ !they kill him
"!God caused angels to give to our ancestors. However, you have not obeyed them

When the Jewish council members and others there heard all that Stephen said, they⁵⁴
became very angry. They were grinding their teeth together because they were so angry at
!him

But the Holy Spirit completely controlled Stephen. He looked up into heaven and⁵⁵
",Look"⁵⁶ .saw a dazzling light from God, and he saw Jesus standing at God's right side
standing where **in human form** he said, "I see right into heaven, and I see the Son of Man
"!God rules

they shouted loudly. They ,**When the Jewish council members and others heard that**⁵⁷
put their hands over their ears so that they would not hear him. All together they ran up to
They dragged him outside the city of Jerusalem and started to⁵⁸ .Stephen and grabbed him
throw stones at him to kill him. The people who were accusing him took off their outer
garments in order to throw stones more easily. They put these garments on the ground next

While they⁵⁹ .to a young man whose name was Saul so that he could guard them
continued to throw stones at Stephen, Stephen prayed out loud, "Lord Jesus, welcome me
"!when I die

Then Stephen knelt down and cried out loud, "Lord, do not punish them for this⁶⁰
.sin!" After he had said this, he died

Then some men who honored God buried Stephen's body in a tomb, and they¹⁻² **8**
.mourned loudly for him

But Saul thought the Sanhedrin had done the right thing by stoning Stephen. On that started severely persecuting the believers who were **Saul was leading** same day, people living in Jerusalem. So most of the believers fled to other places throughout the provinces

Saul began trying to³ .of Judea and Samaria. But the apostles remained in Jerusalem destroy the group of believers. He entered their houses one by one. He dragged away men .and he put them in prison ,**who believed in Jesus** and women

The believers who had left Jerusalem went to different places, where they continued⁴ One of those believers, whose name was Philip, went⁵ .preaching the message about Jesus from Jerusalem to a city in the district of Samaria. There he was telling the people that Many people there heard Philip speak and saw the miraculous⁶ .Jesus is the Messiah For⁷ .things that he was doing. So they all paid close attention to what he was saying example, Philip commanded evil spirits to come out of many people, and they came out screaming. Also, many people who could not move their muscles and many others who .So many people in that city were very happy⁸ .were lame were healed

There was a man in that city whose name was Simon. He had been practicing sorcery⁹ for a long time, and he amazed the people in the district of Samaria with his magic. He The people there, both ordinary and important¹⁰ ”!claimed he was “Simon the Great One They¹¹ ”.people, listened to him. They were saying, “Simon is the Great Power of God continued to listen to him carefully because for a long time he had astonished them by But then they believed Philip’s message of the good news about how¹² .practicing sorcery God would rule the lives of people everywhere and about Jesus the Messiah. Philip Though the people had been¹³ .baptized the men and the women who believed in Jesus worshipping him, Simon too believed Philip’s message and received baptism. He began to accompany Philip constantly. He was continually amazed by the great miracles he saw .Philip doing. These things showed that Philip was speaking the truth

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that many people throughout Samaria district¹⁴ When Peter and John¹⁵ .had believed God’s message, they sent Peter and John there For¹⁶ .arrived in Samaria, they prayed for those new believers to receive the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit had not yet openly empowered any of them. They had only received ,Then Peter and John placed their hands on them¹⁷ .baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus .and they received the Holy Spirit

Simon saw that people received the Holy Spirit as a result of the apostles placing¹⁸ He said, “Enable me¹⁹ .their hands on them. So he offered to give money to the apostles also to do what you are doing, so that if I place my hands on someone, he will receive the

But Peter said to him, “May you and your money be destroyed, because²⁰ ”. Holy Spirit, You cannot work with us in what we are doing²¹ ! you tried to get God’s gift with money So stop thinking wickedly like²² ! because you do not have the right attitude toward God that! Plead with the Lord to forgive you for what you wanted to do, since he will forgive You are in spiritual danger! I perceive that you are extremely²³ . you if you ask sincerely Then Simon²⁴ ”, jealous of us and that a continual desire to do evil is controlling you ”! answered, “Pray to the Lord that he will not do to me what you just said

Peter and John then told the people there what they knew personally about the Lord²⁵ Jesus. They shared the message of the Lord with them. Then they both returned to Jerusalem. Along the way, they declared the good news about Jesus to people living in . many towns in the district of Samaria

. While Peter and John were returning to Jerusalem, the Lord sent an angel to Philip²⁶ that angel told him, “Get , **Even though so many Samaritans were becoming believers in Jesus** ready and go south along the road that goes from Jerusalem to the city of Gaza.” That road So Philip got ready and went along that road. On the road he met a²⁷ . is in a desert area . man from the land of Ethiopia. The man was an important official of the queen of Ethiopia . In his language people called their queen the Kandake. He took care of all of her funds and he was returning home and was²⁸ , This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship God seated, riding in his carriage. As he was riding, he was reading aloud from what the prophet . Isaiah had written

”! God’s Spirit told Philip, “Go near to that carriage and keep walking close to it²⁹ So Philip ran over to the carriage. He heard the official reading what the prophet Isaiah³⁰ He³¹ ”? had written. He asked the man, “Do you understand what you are reading ”. answered Philip, “No, I cannot possibly understand it if there is no one to explain it to me **So Philip got into the** ”. Then the man said to Philip, “Please come up and sit beside me The part of the Scriptures that the official was reading was this: “People will³² . **carriage** . lead him away to kill him as they lead a sheep to the place where they are going to kill it . He will be silent, as a lamb stands silently while someone cuts off its wool

People will humiliate him and condemn him unjustly. He will have no descendants³³ ”. because people will kill him before he can have children

The official asked Philip about what he was reading, “Tell me, who was the prophet³⁴ So Philip replied³⁵ ”? writing about? Was he writing about himself, or about someone else . to him. He began with that Scripture passage, and he told him the good news about Jesus

While they were traveling along the road, they came to a place where there was³⁶ some water. Then the official said to Philip, “Look, there is some water! I would like you to baptize me.” Philip said, “If you believe in Jesus with complete sincerity, God will¹³⁷ ”.baptize me save you, and you may be baptized.” The Ethiopian answered, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” So the official told the driver to stop the carriage. Then both Philip³⁸ [”.is the Son of God When they came up³⁹ .and the official went down into the water, and Philip baptized him out of the water, suddenly the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away. The official never saw Philip again. Even so, the official continued going very happily along the road

Philip then realized that the Spirit had miraculously taken him to the town of⁴⁰ Azotus. While he traveled around in that region, he continued proclaiming the good news about Jesus in all the towns between the cities of Azotus and Caesarea. He was still proclaiming it when he finally arrived in Caesarea

Meanwhile, Saul continued angrily threatening to kill those who believed in the^{1 9} and requested him to write letters² Lord Jesus. He went to the high priest in Jerusalem introducing Saul to the leaders of the Jewish synagogues in the city of Damascus. The letters would ask them to give Saul the authority to seize any man or woman who followed the teachings of Jesus and take them as prisoners to Jerusalem .could judge and punish them. The high priest gave Saul the letters he asked for

.While Saul and those with him were traveling, they were approaching Damascus³ Immediately he fell onto the⁴ .Suddenly a brilliant light from heaven shone around Saul ground. Then he heard the voice of someone say to him, “Saul, Saul, stop trying to hurt me” Saul asked him, “Lord, who are you?” He replied, “I am Jesus, whom you are⁵ ”!me Now stand up and go into the city of Damascus! Someone there will tell you⁶ .hurting The men who were traveling with Saul were so astonished that⁷ ”.what I want you to do they could not say anything. They just stood there. This was because they heard someone speaking, but they did not see anyone Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened⁸ .speaking, but they did not see anyone his eyes, he could not see anything. So the men with him took him by the hand and led him For the next three days Saul could not see anything, and he did not eat or⁹ .into Damascus .drink anything

In Damascus there was a man who believed in Jesus named Ananias. Jesus made¹⁰ him see a vision and in it he called to him, “Ananias!” Ananias replied, “Lord, I am listening” Jesus told him, “Go to Straight Street, to the house that belongs to Judas. Ask¹¹ ”.listening someone there if you can talk to a man named Saul who is from the city of Tarsus. Saul is

Saul has seen a vision in which a man named Ananias¹² .praying to me at this moment
”.entered the house where he was staying and put his hands on him to restore his sight
Ananias answered, “But Lord, many people have told me about this man! He has done¹³
The chief priests have¹⁴ !many bad things to the people in Jerusalem who believe in you
given him permission to come here to Damascus and take prisoner all those who believe in
But Jesus told Ananias, “Go visit Saul! Do what I say, because I have chosen him¹⁵ ”!you
to serve me. I want him to speak about me to non-Jewish people and their leaders and to the
I myself will tell him that he must often suffer in order to tell people¹⁶ .Israelite people
.So Ananias went, and after he found the house where Saul was, he entered it¹⁷ ”.about me
Then, as soon as he met Saul, he put his hands on him, and he said, “Saul, you are already
like a brother to me. Jesus himself commanded me to come to you. Jesus is the one who
appeared to you while you were traveling along the road to Damascus. He sent me to you to
,Instantly¹⁸ ”.restore your sight, and he wants the Holy Spirit to lead and empower you
what seemed like flakes fell from Saul’s eyes, and he was able to see again. Then he got up
After Saul ate some food, he became strong again. Saul stayed with¹⁹ .and was baptized
.the other believers in Damascus for several days

Right away he began to preach about Jesus in the Jewish synagogues. He told the²⁰
The people who heard him preach were²¹ .people there that Jesus is the Son of God
amazed. Some of them were saying, “We can hardly believe that this is the same man who
persecuted the believers in Jerusalem! And he came here to take them as prisoners to the
But God enabled Saul to preach to many people even more²² ”!chief priests in Jerusalem
convincingly. He was proving from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah. The Jewish
.because they could not disprove what he said leaders in Damascus became angry

Those Jewish²⁴ .Some time later, the Jewish leaders there plotted to kill him²³
leaders were continually watching the people passing through the city gates so that if they
.saw Saul there, they could kill him. However, someone told Saul what they planned to do
So some of those whom he had led to believe in Jesus took him one night to the high²⁵
stone wall that surrounded the city. They used ropes to lower him in a large basket through
.an opening in the wall. In this way he escaped from Damascus

.When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to meet with the other believers there²⁶
However, almost all of them continued to be afraid of him. They were not convinced that
But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He²⁷ .he had become a believer
explained to the apostles how, while Saul was traveling along the road to Damascus, he had
seen Jesus, who had spoken to him there. He also told them how Saul had preached boldly

.Some ancient manuscripts include verse 37 .I

So Saul began to meet with the apostles and other²⁸ .about Jesus to people in Damascus .believers throughout Jerusalem. He spoke boldly to the people there about Jesus

Saul was also speaking about Jesus with Jews who spoke Greek, and he was²⁹ so they were continually trying to ,**They could not answer his arguments** .debating with them

But the other believers found out that the Jews who spoke³⁰ .think of a way to kill him Greek were planning to kill Saul. So some of them took him to the city of Caesarea. There .they put him on a ship that was going to Tarsus, his hometown

Since no one was persecuting them anymore, the believers throughout the entire³¹ regions of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria were able to live peacefully. The Holy Spirit was strengthening them and encouraging them. They were honoring the Lord Jesus, and the .Holy Spirit was leading many other people to become believers

Peter to travel throughout those regions. Once he **Those peaceful conditions allowed**³² There he³³ .went to the coastal plain to visit the believers who lived in the town of Lydda met a man whose name was Aeneas. Aeneas was not able to walk or stand, and so he had Peter said to him, “Aeneas, Jesus³⁴ .not been able to get up from his bed for eight years .the Messiah heals you! Get up and roll up your own mat!” Right away Aeneas stood up Most of the people who lived in Lydda and on the Plain of Sharon saw Aeneas after the³⁵ .Lord had healed him, so they believed in the Lord Jesus

In the town of Joppa there was a believer whose name was Tabitha. Her name in the³⁶ Greek language was Dorcas. She was always doing good deeds for poor people by giving During the time that Peter was in Lydda, she became sick³⁷ .them things that they needed Then they .**according to the Jewish custom** and died. Some women there washed her body .placed it in an upstairs room in her house **covered her body with cloth and**

Lydda was near the city of Joppa, so when the disciples heard that Peter was still in³⁸ Lydda, they sent two men to go to Peter. When they arrived where Peter was, they urged Peter got ready right away and went³⁹ ”!him, “Please come immediately with us to Joppa with them. When he arrived at the house in Joppa, they took him to the upstairs room where the body of Dorcas was lying. All the widows there stood around him. They were crying and showing him the tunics and other garments that Dorcas had made for people while she Then he got .**so that he could pray** But Peter sent them all out of the room⁴⁰ .was still alive ”!down on his knees and prayed. Then, turning toward her body, he said, “Tabitha, stand up He grasped one⁴¹ .Immediately she opened her eyes and, when she saw Peter, she sat up of her hands and helped her to stand up. After he had summoned the believers and especially the widows among them to come back in, he showed them that she was alive

Soon people everywhere in Joppa knew about that miracle and, as a result, many⁴² .again
 ,Peter stayed in Joppa many days with a man named Simon⁴³ .people believed in Jesus
 .who made leather from animal skins

There was a man whose name was Cornelius who lived in the city of¹ 10
 Caesarea. He was an officer who commanded 100 men in a large group of Roman soldiers
 He continually tried to do what would please God. He and his entire² .from Italy
 household were non-Jews who worshiped God. He often gave money to help poor Jewish
 .people. He prayed to God regularly

One day at about three o'clock in the afternoon, Cornelius saw a vision. He clearly³
 saw an angel whom God had sent. He saw the angel coming into his room and saying to
 Cornelius stared at the angel and became terrified. Then he asked⁴ ”!him, “Cornelius
 fearfully, “Sir, what do you want?” The angel answered him, “You have been praying
 regularly to God. You often give money to help poor people. Those things have been like an
 .So now command some men to go to Joppa⁵ .offering to God, and he has noticed them
 He is staying⁶ .Tell them to bring back a man named Simon whose other name is Peter
 When⁷ ”.with a man, also named Simon, who makes leather. His house is near the ocean
 the angel who was speaking with Cornelius had gone, he summoned two of his household
 He explained to⁸ .servants and a soldier who served him, one who also worshiped God
 them everything that the angel had said. Then he told them to go to the city of Joppa and
 .ask Peter to come to Caesarea

About noon the next day, those three men were traveling along the road. As they were⁹
 Peter became hungry and¹⁰ .approaching Joppa, Peter went up on the flat housetop to pray
 .wanted something to eat. While some people were preparing the food, he saw a vision
 He saw an opening in the sky through which something like a large, square piece of¹¹
 cloth was coming down. Someone seemed to be lowering it by its four corners to the
 .Inside the sheet were many different kinds of creatures. Some had four feet¹² .ground
 others crawled on the ground, and others were wild birds. These included animals and birds
 ,Then he heard God say to him, “Go ahead¹³ .that the Mosaic laws forbade Jews to eat
 But Peter replied, “Lord, surely not! I have¹⁴ ”.Peter, kill some of these and eat them
 never eaten anything that our Jewish law says is unacceptable to you or that we must not
 Then Peter heard God talk to him a second time. He said, “I am God, so if I have¹⁵ ”!eat
 This¹⁶ ”!made something acceptable to eat, do not say that it is not acceptable to eat
 happened three times. Right after that, the sheet with the animals and birds went back up
 .into the sky

This left Peter trying to understand what that vision meant. Meanwhile, the men¹⁷ Cornelius had sent arrived in Joppa. They asked people how to get to Simon's house. When They called from the¹⁸ .people told them, they found the house and stood outside the gate and asked if a man whose name was Simon, whose other name was Peter, was staying While Peter was still trying to understand what the vision meant, the Holy Spirit¹⁹ .there So do not be²⁰ .said to him, "Listen! Three men are here who want you to go with them ,reluctant. Go downstairs and go with them! Do not think that you should not go with them ,So Peter went down to the men and said to them²¹ "!"because I have sent them here ,They replied²² "?"Greetings! I am the man you are looking for. Why have you come" Cornelius, who is a Roman army officer, sent us here. He is a good man who worships" God. All of the Jewish people who know about him speak well of him. An angel from God told Cornelius, 'Have some men to go to Joppa and get Simon Peter. Bring him to your So Peter invited them into the house and told²³ "'house and listen to what he has to say .them that they should stay there that night

The next day Peter got ready and went with the men. Several of the believers from .The day after that, they arrived in the city of Caesarea²⁴ .Joppa also went with him ,Cornelius was waiting for them. He had also invited his relatives and close friends to come When Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him²⁵ .so they were there in his house too But Peter grasped Cornelius by the hand²⁶ .and bowed low in front of him to worship him and lifted him to his feet. He said, "Stand up! Do not bow down and worship me! I myself "!"am only human, like you

entered the house. They saw **and the others** While he was talking to Cornelius, Peter²⁷ ,Then Peter said to them²⁸ .**and hear Peter** that Cornelius had invited many people to come You all know that we Jews think we are disobeying our laws if we associate with people" that **in a vision** who are not Jews or visit them in their homes. However, God has shown me So when you sent some²⁹ .I should not say that God only accepts people who are Jews men to ask me to come here, I came right away without objection. So, please tell me, why "?"have you asked me to come here

Cornelius replied, "About this time three days ago, I was praying to God in my³⁰ house, as I regularly do at three o'clock in the afternoon. Suddenly a man whose clothes and said, 'Cornelius, God has heard your prayer. He³¹ shone brightly stood in front of me has also noticed that you have often given money to help poor people, and he is pleased ,So now, send messengers to go to the city of Joppa in order to ask Simon³² .with that whose other name is Peter, to come here. He is staying near the ocean in a house that So I sent some men right³³ '.belongs to another man named Simon, who makes leather

away to ask you to come here. I certainly thank you for coming. Now we all are gathered here, knowing that God is with us. We want to hear all the things that the Lord God has
".commanded you to say. So please speak to us

So Peter began to speak to them. He said, "Now I understand that it is true that God³⁴

Instead, from every people group he³⁵ .does not favor only certain groups of people
You know what God³⁶ .accepts everyone who honors him and who does what pleases him
told us Israelites. He proclaimed to us the good news that people could live peacefully with
him because of what Jesus the Messiah has done. This Jesus is not Lord only over us

You know what Jesus did³⁷ .Israelites. He is also the Lord who rules over all people
throughout the land of Judea, beginning in Galilee. He started to do those things after John
proclaimed to people that they should stop their sinful behavior. If they did, John baptized

You know that God gave his Holy Spirit to Jesus, the man from the town of³⁸ .them
Nazareth, and gave him the power to do miracles. You also know how Jesus went to many
places, doing good deeds. Whenever he met people whom the devil was causing to suffer
".he healed them. It was God who enabled Jesus to do those things

We all saw the things Jesus did in Jerusalem and around every part of the land of³⁹
Jesus⁴⁰ .Israel where he lived. His enemies killed him by nailing him to a wooden cross
died on a Friday, but God brought him back to life that Sunday. God made sure that many

At that time God did not let⁴¹ .people would see that he was certainly alive again
everyone see him. God had previously chosen some people to be witnesses that Jesus was
alive. I am one of the people who saw him and even ate meals together with him just after
Jesus commanded us to preach to the people and tell them⁴² .God brought him back to life
that God has chosen him to judge everyone one day. He will judge those who are still alive

All the prophets who wrote about him long⁴³ .and those who have died before that day
ago told the people about him. They wrote that if anyone believed in him, God would
".forgive whatever sins they had done, because of what this man, Jesus, would do for them

While Peter was still speaking about Jesus, suddenly the Holy Spirit came to all⁴⁴

The Jewish⁴⁵ .those people from other nations who were listening to the message
believers who had come with Peter from Joppa were amazed that God had so kindly given
The Jewish believers knew that⁴⁶ .the Holy Spirit to people from all different nations too
God had done that because they were hearing those people speak in other languages to tell
God has", **to the other Jewish believers who were there**⁴⁷ ,how great God is. Then Peter said
given them the Holy Spirit just as he gave him to us Jewish believers. Surely all of you
Then Peter told Cornelius and his⁴⁸ "!"would agree that we should baptize these people
Peter and the .guests that they should receive baptism as believers in Jesus the Messiah
After they had received .**believers who had come with him from Joppa baptized all of them**

So he and the other .baptism, Cornelius invited Peter to stay with them for several days

.Jewish believers did that

The apostles and other believers who lived in various towns in the province of¹ 11

Judea heard that some non-Jewish people had also believed the message of God about
followed the teaching of the But there were some Jewish believers in Jerusalem who² .Jesus
believed that Jews should not associate with non-Jews. When Peter came Pharisees and
They said to³ .back from Caesarea to Jerusalem, they met with him and criticized him
,him, “Not only was it wrong for you to go into the home of someone who was not Jewish
”!you even ate there

in by myself He said, “I was praying⁵ .So Peter told them exactly what had happened⁴
the city of Joppa, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet coming
As I was⁶ .down from heaven, suspended by its four corners. It came down to where I was
,gazing at it, I looked closely and I saw some tame animals and also some wild animals
Then I heard a voice commanding me, ‘Go ahead, Peter, kill⁷ .reptiles, and wild birds
But I replied, ‘Lord, surely not! I have never eaten anything that our⁸ ’!some and eat them
,The voice spoke to me from heaven a second time: ‘I am God⁹ ’!laws say we must not eat
This same¹⁰ ’.so if I have made something acceptable to eat, do not say it is unacceptable
thing happened two more times. Then the sheet with all those animals and birds went back
.up into heaven

At that exact moment, three men arrived at the house where I was staying. Their¹¹
God’s Spirit told me that I should not¹² .master had sent them to bring me to Caesarea
hesitate to go with them even though they were not Jews. Six Jewish believers went with
He told us that¹³ .me to Caesarea. We went into the house of the man who had sent for me
he had seen an angel standing in his house. The angel told him, ‘Tell some men to go to
He will tell you how God will¹⁴ .Joppa and bring back Simon whose other name is Peter
While I was speaking to them, the Holy¹⁵ ’.save you and everyone else in your house
Then I¹⁶ .Spirit suddenly came to them just as he came to us during the Pentecost festival
remembered what Jesus had said: ‘John baptized you with water, but God will baptize you
God gave us the Holy Spirit when we believed in the Lord Jesus¹⁷ ’.with the Holy Spirit
as the Messiah. God gave those non-Jews the same Holy Spirit. So I had to cooperate with
”.and baptize them what God was doing

.After those Jewish believers heard what Peter said, they stopped criticizing him¹⁸
Instead, they praised God. They said, “It is clear that God has accepted non-Jews so they
”.too can have everlasting life if they turn from their sinful behavior

After Stephen died, people started persecuting the other believers in Jerusalem. So¹⁹ many of them left and went to other places. Some of them went to the land of Phoenicia. Some went to the island of Cyprus. Others went to the city of Antioch in Syria. In those places, they told people the good news about Jesus. But most of them told only other Jews. But some of the believers were men from the island of Cyprus and from²⁰ Jewish people the city of Cyrene in north Africa. They went to Antioch and also spoke with non-Jewish people. The Lord God was powerfully enabling²¹ people, telling them that Jesus is the Messiah. Those believers were able to preach effectively. As a result, very many non-Jewish people believed their message and trusted in Jesus.

The group of believers in Jerusalem learned that many people in Antioch were²² to teach and encourage the new believing in Jesus. So they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When Barnabas got to Antioch, he recognized that God had acted kindly²³ believers toward the people there. This made him very happy. He encouraged all of the new believers. Barnabas was a good man whom the²⁴ to continue to trust in the Lord Jesus completely. The Holy Spirit completely controlled him. He trusted God completely. Because of what Barnabas did, many more people in Antioch believed in Jesus.

Then Barnabas left Antioch and went to the city of Tarsus in the province of Cilicia²⁵. After Barnabas found Saul, he brought him back to Antioch to help²⁶ to look for Saul to teach the believers there. Barnabas and Saul met regularly with the church there for a whole year. They taught large numbers of people about Jesus. The people of Antioch were the first people who called the disciples of Jesus “Christians.”

During the time that Barnabas and Saul were in Antioch, some believers who were²⁷ in One of them whose name was Agabus stood up²⁸ prophets came there from Jerusalem. God’s Spirit enabled him to prophesy that there would soon be a severe order to speak shortage of food in many countries. (This shortage happened when Claudius was the emperor. They decided that, When the believers there heard what Agabus said²⁹ (Roman emperor Claudius decided that they would send money to help the believers who lived in Judea. Each of them decided to give. They sent the money with Barnabas and³⁰ give as much money as he was able to give. Saul to the leaders of the believers in Jerusalem.

About this same time, King Herod Agrippa sent soldiers to arrest some of the¹ 12 leaders of the group of believers in Jerusalem. The soldiers put them in prison. The king did not like them. He commanded a² that because he wanted to hurt the believers and their community, he ordered a soldier to cut off the head of the apostle James, the older brother of the apostle John. So the king was pleased. When Herod realized that he had pleased the leaders of the Jewish³ soldier did that.

people, he commanded soldiers to arrest Peter too. This happened during the festival when
After the soldiers arrested Peter, they put him⁴ .the Jewish people ate bread without yeast
in prison. Herod assigned four groups of soldiers to guard Peter. Each group had four
soldiers. Herod wanted to bring Peter out of prison and judge him in front of the Jewish
.**He then planned to execute Peter** .people after the Passover Festival was finished

So for several days Peter stayed in prison. But the other believers in their group in⁵
It was the night before⁶ .Jerusalem were urgently praying to God, asking him to help Peter

Herod planned to bring Peter out of prison and have him executed publicly. Peter was
sleeping in the prison between two soldiers. A soldier on one side of him had locked a chain
onto Peter's wrist and his own wrist. A soldier on the other side of Peter had done the same

Suddenly, an angel from the⁷ .thing. Two more soldiers were guarding the prison doors
But Peter was still sleeping so .Lord God stood beside Peter. A bright light shone in his cell
the angel poked him in the side to wake him up. The angel told him, "Get up **soundly that**
However, the soldiers .the chains fell off from his wrists ,**While Peter was getting up** "!"quickly

Then the angel said to him, "Fasten your belt⁸ .**were not aware of what was happening**
around you and tie your sandals onto your feet!" And Peter did what the angel told him to
put So Peter⁹ "!"do. Then the angel told him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me
followed the angel out of the prison cell. He had no idea that all **on his cloak and sandals and**
Peter and the angel walked¹⁰ .this was really happening. He thought that he was dreaming
by the soldiers who were guarding the two doors, but the soldiers did not see them. Then
they came to the iron gate that led into the city. The gate swung open for them, and Peter
and the angel walked out of the prison. After they had walked some distance along one
Then Peter finally realized that this was not a¹¹ .street, the angel suddenly disappeared
vision, it was really happening. So he thought, "Now I know that the Lord God truly sent
an angel to help me. He rescued me from what Herod planned to do to me and from all the
".things that the Jewish leaders expected would happen

When Peter realized that God had rescued him, he went to Mary's house. She was¹²
the mother of John, whose other name was Mark. Many believers had assembled there, and

When Peter knocked at the¹³ .they were praying that God would help Peter somehow
outer entrance, a servant girl whose name was Rhoda came to find out who was outside the
she recognized his voice, but she was so happy and excited ,**When Peter responded**¹⁴ .door
that she forgot to open the door! Instead, she ran back into the house. She told the other

But they said to her, "You must be¹⁵ .believers that Peter was standing outside the door
No, it cannot" ,crazy!" But she continued to say that it was really true. They kept responding

But Peter kept knocking the whole time those inside¹⁶ ".It is probably his angel .**be Peter**
were talking. So when some of them finally opened the door, they saw that it was Peter, and

Peter waved his hand to get them to be quiet. Then he told¹⁷ !they could hardly believe it them exactly how the Lord God had let him out of the prison. He also said, “Tell James, the leader of our group, and our other fellow believers what has happened.” Then Peter left and .went away somewhere else

.saw that he was gone The next morning the soldiers who had been guarding Peter¹⁸
Then Herod¹⁹ .They wondered what had happened to him, and they became terribly upset .he commanded soldiers to search for Peter, but they did not find him heard about it. So But the soldiers had no .Then Herod questioned the soldiers who had been guarding Peter which ,So Herod commanded them to be executed .good explanation for what had happened Afterwards, Herod went from .was how the Romans punished guards whose prisoners escaped .the province of Judea to the city of Caesarea, where he stayed for some time

King Herod became very upset with the people who lived in the cities of Tyre and²⁰
But the people of Tyre and .He stopped them from trading with the people he ruled .Sidon Sidon needed to buy food from those regions. So they sent representatives together to the city of Caesarea to meet with Herod. They persuaded Blastus, who was one of Herod’s On the²¹ .important officials, to tell Herod that they wanted to live peacefully with him he did some ,day that Herod had planned to meet with the representatives of Tyre and Sidon .He put on very expensive clothes and he sat on his royal throne .things to impress them Those who were²² .Then he formally addressed all the people who had gathered there listening to him shouted repeatedly, “King Herod speaks so well that he must be a god, not Herod accepted the praise of the people instead of telling them they should²³ ”!a man praise God. So while the people were still praising Herod, the Lord God sent an angel to .punish him. That angel punished him severely: Worms ate him and he died

The believers continued telling God’s message to people in many places, and the²⁴
.number of people who believed in Jesus was continually increasing

Barnabas and Saul finished delivering the money to help the Jewish believers in the²⁵
province of Judea. They returned to the city of Jerusalem. They brought John, whose other .name was Mark, with them

At that time in the group of believers in the city of Antioch there were¹ 13

;prophets and teachers. They were: Barnabas; Simeon, whose other name was Niger Lucius, who was from the city of Cyrene; Manaen, who had grown up with Herod Antipas

While the believers in Antioch were² .when he was the ruler of Galilee; and Saul worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit spoke to them. He said, “I want you to let Barnabas and Saul serve me in a particular way. I want you to send them on a special

.So the believers fasted and prayed some more³ ”.mission that I have chosen them to do
to show that they approved of them going on Then they put their hands on Barnabas and Saul
.Then they sent them off to do what the Holy Spirit had commanded .this special mission

The Holy Spirit gave Barnabas and Saul instructions about where to go. So they went⁴
from Antioch to the city of Seleucia, which is by the sea. From there they went by ship to
While they were in Salamis, they went to the⁵ .the city of Salamis on the island of Cyprus
Jewish meeting places. There they proclaimed the message God had told them to share
.about Jesus. John Mark went with them and was helping them

and shared the The three of them crossed from one side of the island to the other⁶
.Eventually they came to the city of Paphos .gospel message in each town they passed through
There they met a sorcerer whose name was Bar Jesus. He was a Jew who falsely claimed to
,He was often in the company of the governor of the island, Sergius Paulus⁷ .be a prophet
who was a sensible man. The governor sent someone to ask Barnabas and Saul to come to
However, Bar Jesus, who⁸ .him because he wanted to hear what God had told them to say
also called himself Elymas, contradicted what Barnabas and Paul were saying. (The name
Elymas means “the Sorcerer.”) He kept trying to persuade the governor not to believe in
.Saul was using his Roman name, Paul, because he was visiting a Roman official⁹ .Jesus
Paul¹⁰ .The Holy Spirit gave Paul boldness and insight. He looked steadily at the sorcerer
said, “You are constantly lying to people and doing things to deceive them! You are serving
the devil! You try to stop everything that is good! You must stop trying to keep people from
Right now the Lord God is going to punish you! You¹¹ !living in the way that God wants
will become blind and you will not even be able to see the sun until God decides to let you
see again.” At once Elymas could no longer see clearly. Then he could not see at all. He
When¹² .wandered around, searching for someone to take him by the hand and lead him
Sergius Paulus saw what had happened to Elymas, he believed in Jesus. The truth and
.power of what Paul and Barnabas were teaching about Jesus amazed him

After that, Paul and the people with him traveled by sailboat from Paphos to the city¹³
of Perga in the province of Pamphylia. At Perga, John Mark left them and returned to his
Then Paul and Barnabas traveled by land from Perga and arrived in¹⁴ .home in Jerusalem
On the Sabbath, they .in the province of Galatia the city of Antioch in the district of Pisidia
Someone read aloud from¹⁵ .as rabbis did entered the Jewish meeting place and sat down
what Moses had written in the books of the Law. Next someone read from what the
prophets had written. Then the leaders of the Jewish meeting place sent a message to Paul
and Barnabas. They said, “Fellow Jews, if one of you wants to speak to the people here to
”.encourage them, please speak to us now

.so that the people would listen to him So Paul stood up and motioned with his hand¹⁶
Then he said, “Fellow Israelites and you non-Jewish people who also worship God, please
God, whom we Israelites worship, chose our ancestors to be his people. He¹⁷ !listen to me
caused them to become very numerous while they were foreigners living in Egypt. Then
He put up with their¹⁸ .God did powerful things to lead them out of slavery there
He enabled the¹⁹ .disobedience for about forty years while they were in the wilderness
Israelites to conquer seven people groups who were then living in the region of Canaan. He
The Israelites spent about 450 years in Egypt²⁰ .gave their land to the Israelites to live in
”.and in the wilderness

After that, God chose people to serve as judges and as leaders to rule the Israelite“
Then, while²¹ .people. The prophet Samuel was the last of these judges to rule them
Samuel was still their leader, the people demanded that he choose a king to rule them. So
God chose Saul, the son of Kish from the tribe of Benjamin, to be their king. He ruled them
After God had rejected Saul from being king, he chose David to be their²² .for 40 years
king. God said about him, ‘I have seen that David, son of Jesse, is exactly the kind of man
’’.who desires what I desire. He will do everything that I want him to do

.God brought one of David’s descendants, Jesus, to us Israelite people to save us“²³
Before²⁴ .This is what he had promised David and our other ancestors that he would do
Jesus began his work, John the Baptizer preached to all of our Israelite people who came to
him. He told them that they should turn away from their sinful behavior and ask God to
When John was about to finish the work that²⁵ .forgive them. Then he would baptize them
God gave him to do, he told the crowds, ‘Do not think that I am the Messiah whom God
promised to send, because I am not. But listen! The Messiah will soon come. He is so much
greater than I am that I do not even deserve to be his slave and take the sandals off his
’’.feet

My fellow Israelites who are descendants of Abraham and you non-Jewish people“²⁶
The²⁷ .who also worship God, please listen! God has told all of us how he saves people
people living in Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus. They heard someone
But they .on every Sabbath day **in their synagogues** read from the writings of the prophets
And so what the prophets predicted long **.did not understand what the prophets were saying**
Many people accused Jesus of doing²⁸ .ago came true when they condemned Jesus to death
.They could not prove that he had done anything for which he deserved to die **.wicked things**
They did to²⁹ .But they still demanded that Pilate, the governor, condemn him to death
.Jesus all the things that the prophets had written long ago that people would do to him
Then they took his body down from the cross and **.They killed Jesus by nailing him to a cross**
For³¹ .However, God brought him back to life after he was dead³⁰ .placed it in a tomb

many days he repeatedly appeared to his disciples who had come along with him from
".Galilee to Jerusalem. Those who saw him are telling the people about him now

Right now we are proclaiming this good news to you. God made a promise to our³²
God has kept that promise for us who are their descendants, and also³³ .Jewish ancestors
for you who are not Jews, by making Jesus alive again. It is just like what David wrote in
:when God was speaking about sending his Son ,the second Psalm

;You are my Son'
'today I have become your Father

God has made the Messiah alive after he was dead, and God will never let him die³⁴
,again. God promised that to the Messiah when he said in the Scriptures

That is why, in³⁵ '.I will certainly help you, as I promised David that I would do'
:another psalm, David also says

While David was³⁶ '.You, God, will not allow the body of your Messiah to decay'
living, he did what God wanted him to do. Then when he died his body was buried
So he could .where his ancestors' bodies had been buried. Then David's body decayed
But God made Jesus alive again³⁷ .not have been speaking about himself in this psalm
".after he died, and his body did not decay

So, fellow Israelites and other friends, we want you to know that God is promising³⁸
to forgive your sins as a result of what Jesus has done. You could not become right with
God by obeying the laws that Moses wrote because there were many laws that you were not
But now God declares that all people who believe in Jesus are no longer³⁹ .able to obey
So then be⁴⁰ .guilty of any of the things that they have done that have displeased him
God said⁴¹ !careful that God does not judge you, as the prophets said that God would do
,through the prophet Habakkuk

.You who ridicule me, you will certainly be amazed when you see what I am doing'
Then you will be destroyed. You will be amazed because I will do something terrible to
you while you are living. You would not believe that I would do that even if someone
""!told you

After Paul finished speaking, and as he and Barnabas were going away, many of the⁴²
people there asked them to return on the next Sabbath and speak to them about these things
When the meeting was over, many people became disciples of Jesus, as Paul and⁴³ .again
Barnabas had encouraged them to do. These people were both Jews and non-Jews who

worshipped God. Paul and Barnabas continued talking to them. They urged them to continue
.to trust that God kindly forgives people's sins because of what Jesus did

On the next Sabbath day, most of the people in Antioch came to the Jewish meeting⁴⁴

The leaders of the Jews saw the⁴⁵ .place to hear Paul and Barnabas speak about Jesus
large crowds of people that were coming to hear Paul and Barnabas. This made them
extremely jealous. So they began to contradict the things that Paul was saying. They also

Then, speaking very boldly, Paul and Barnabas said to those Jewish⁴⁶ .insulted him
leaders, "We had to speak the message from God about Jesus to you Jews first before we
proclaim it to non-Jews, because God commanded us to do that. But you are rejecting
.God's message. By doing that, you have shown that you are not worthy of everlasting life
Therefore, we are leaving you, and now we will go to the non-Jewish people to tell them
We are doing this because the Lord God has commanded us to⁴⁷ .the message from God
I have chosen you to reveal things about me to non-Jewish' ,He said in the Scriptures .do it
people that will be like a light to them. I have chosen you to tell people everywhere in the
"" .world the message that I want to save them

When the non-Jewish people heard those words, they rejoiced. They praised God for⁴⁸
the message about Jesus. All of the non-Jewish people whom God had chosen for

At that time, many of the believers traveled⁴⁹ .everlasting life put their trust in Jesus
around throughout that region, spreading the message about the Lord Jesus everywhere
.they went

However, some leaders of the Jews talked to some important women who worshiped⁵⁰
with them. They also talked to the most important men in the city. The Jewish leaders
-persuaded the non-Jewish city leaders to try to stop Paul and Barnabas. So those non
Jewish people led many citizens against Paul and Barnabas, and they made them leave their
As the two apostles were leaving, they shook the dust off their feet. This was to⁵¹ .region
show those leaders that God had rejected them and would punish them. Then they left the
Meanwhile, the people in Antioch who⁵² .city of Antioch and went to the city of Iconium
.had believed in Jesus were very happy and the Holy Spirit was helping them greatly

.At Iconium, Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish meeting place¹ 14

There they spoke very powerfully about the Lord Jesus. As a result, very many Jews and
But some of the Jews refused to believe that message. They² .non-Jews believed in Jesus
made some of the non-Jews angry and bitter toward the people who had put their trust in
But Paul and Barnabas spent a long time there speaking boldly about Jesus. Jesus³ .Jesus
enabled them to do many miracles. In this way, he showed people the truth of the message
.that God saves us even though we do not deserve it

The people who lived in Iconium had two different opinions. Some agreed with the⁴
Then the non-Jewish people and the Jews⁵ .Jews. Others agreed with Paul and Barnabas
who opposed Paul and Barnabas talked among themselves about how they could mistreat
,Paul and Barnabas. Some of the important men in that city agreed to help them. Together
But Paul⁶ .they decided that they would kill Paul and Barnabas by throwing stones at them
.and Barnabas heard about their plan. They quickly went away to the district of Lycaonia
.They went to the cities of Lystra and Derbe in that district and to the surrounding area
.While they were in that area, they continually told the people the good news about Jesus⁷

.In Lystra, they saw a man who was sitting down because he was crippled in his legs⁸
.When his mother gave birth to him, he had crippled legs, so he had never been able to walk
He listened as Paul was speaking about Jesus. Paul looked directly at him and could see⁹
So Paul shouted out¹⁰ .in the man's face that he believed that Jesus could make him well
to him, "Stand up straight!" When the man heard that, his legs became strong. He
.immediately jumped up and began to walk around

this made them think that Paul and ,When the crowd saw Paul heal the crippled man¹¹
they shouted excitedly in their own Barnabas were the gods that they worshiped. So
Lycaonian language, "Look! The gods have made themselves look like people and they
They began to say that Barnabas was¹² "!"have come down from the sky to help us
probably the chief god, whose name was Zeus. And they began to say that Paul was
Hermes, the messenger for the other gods. They believed this because Paul was the one
People worshiped Zeus at a temple just outside the gates of the¹³ .who had been speaking
city. The priest who was there heard what Paul and Barnabas had done, so he came to the
city gate, where many people had already gathered. He brought bulls with wreaths of
flowers around their necks. The priest and the crowd of people wanted to kill the bulls as
But when the apostles Barnabas and¹⁴ .part of a ceremony to worship Paul and Barnabas
to show that they Paul heard about that, they were very upset. They tore their own clothes
,They rushed among the people, shouting .did not want the people to sacrifice to them
People of Lystra, you must not kill those bulls to worship us! We are not gods! We are"¹⁵
human beings who are just the same as you! We have come to tell you some good news
about the one true God. You can stop worshiping other so-called gods, because they cannot
help you. This true God made the sky, the land, the oceans, and everything that lives in
In the past, God allowed the non-Jewish people groups to worship whatever gods¹⁶ .them
Even so, God showed you non-Jewish people that he is a good¹⁷ .they wanted to worship
God. He sent rain to make your crops grow. He gave you plenty of food so that you could
Paul and Barnabas said all these things to the people. Even so, it was¹⁸ ".enjoy your lives
.very difficult for them to keep the people from sacrificing those bulls to worship them

Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and convinced many of the people¹⁹
The people who believed what those .of Lystra that Paul had not been telling them the truth
They let those Jews throw stones at him until he fell to **.Jews said became angry with Paul**
the ground. They all thought that he was dead, so they dragged him outside the city and left
But some of the believers in Lystra came and stood around Paul, where²⁰ .him lying there
he was lying on the ground. Suddenly Paul stood up! He went back into the city with the
.believers

.The next day, Paul and Barnabas left the city of Lystra and traveled to the city of Derbe
In the city of Derbe they spent several days telling the people about Jesus. Many people²¹
there became believers. After that, Paul and Barnabas started on their way back home. They
went again to Lystra. Then they went from there to Iconium. Then they went to the city of

In each place, they urged the believers to keep²² .Antioch in the province of Pisidia
trusting Jesus. They told the believers, “We suffer many hardships in this world when we
Paul and Barnabas chose leaders for each²³ ”.are allowing God to rule over us
congregation. Before they left each place, they gathered the believers together and spent
,some time praying and fasting. Then they entrusted the leaders and other believers to Jesus
.in whom they had believed, in order that he would care for them

After Paul and Barnabas had traveled through the district of Pisidia, they went south²⁴
In that district, they arrived at the town of Perga. They²⁵ .to the district of Pamphylia
preached God’s message about Jesus to the people there. Then they went down to the
There they got on a ship and went back to the city of²⁶ .seacoast at the town of Attalia
Antioch in the province of Syria. The people there had chosen Paul and Barnabas to go to
other places and preach. That was where the believers had asked God to help Paul and
When they arrived in the city of²⁷ .Barnabas do the work that they had now completed
Antioch, they called the believers together. Then Paul and Barnabas told them all that God
had helped them to do. Specifically, they told them how God had enabled many non-Jewish
Then Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch with the other²⁸ .people to believe in Jesus
.believers for a long time

But then some Jewish believers from the province of Judea arrived in¹ 15
Antioch. They started telling the non-Jewish believers there, “You must receive
as Moses commanded in the laws that he ,**to show that you belong to God** circumcision
Paul and Barnabas had² ”.received from God. If you do not do that, God will not save you
so the believers at ,**They could not settle their disagreement** .a big argument with those Jews
Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas and some of the other believers to Jerusalem. That way
.they could discuss this issue with the apostles and other leaders there

.After the believers in Antioch had sent Paul, Barnabas, and the others on their way³
they traveled through the provinces of Phoenicia and Samaria. When they stopped at
different places along the way, they told the believers in those places that many non-Jews
.were putting their trust in Jesus. When the believers heard this, they rejoiced greatly
When Paul, Barnabas, and the others arrived in Jerusalem, the apostles, elders, and other⁴
believers there welcomed them. Then Paul and Barnabas reported the things that God had
among non-Jewish people enabled them to do

to get the attention of But some of the Jewish believers who were Pharisees stood up⁵
They said to them, “The non-Jews who have believed in Jesus must the other believers
”.receive circumcision. We must also tell them to obey the laws that God gave to Moses

After⁷ .Then the apostles and the elders met together in order to talk about this issue⁶
He said to .to get everyone’s attention they had discussed it for a long time, Peter stood up
them, “Fellow believers, you all know that a long time ago God chose me from among you
for an important task. He wanted me to tell the non-Jewish people the good other apostles
God knows what every person is⁸ .news about Jesus. God wanted them to believe in him
truly like. He showed me and others that he had accepted the non-Jews as his people. He
God treated⁹ .to us he gave the Holy Spirit did that by giving the Holy Spirit to them just as
.them in the same way that he treated us. He forgave their sins because they trusted in Jesus
Listen carefully! God has shown what he wants, so you should not be trying to promote¹⁰
something else. You should not be trying to force non-Jewish believers to obey our Jewish
laws! That would be like putting a heavy burden on them. Our ancestors were not able to
We are¹¹ .obey those laws. We Jews today have not been able to obey them either
.confident that God saves us Jews from our sins because of what the Lord Jesus did for us
And we are confident that God will save in the same way those non-Jews who believe in
”.Jesus

After Peter had spoken, Barnabas and Paul told about the many great miracles that¹²
The miracles showed that God .God had enabled them to do among the non-Jewish people
The people who heard Barnabas and Paul tell about these .had accepted these non-Jews
.miracles were so fascinated that all they did was listen. None of them said anything

When Barnabas and Paul had finished speaking, James, the leader of the group of¹³
.believers in Jerusalem, spoke to everyone. He said, “Fellow believers, listen to me
.Simon Peter has told you how God previously showed that he cared about the non-Jews¹⁴
.God did that by choosing from among them a group of people who would belong to him
What God said long ago, as we can read in the writings of one of the prophets, agrees¹⁵
:with that

Later on, I will help the Israelites again. I will restore the kingdom of David that has¹⁶

I will do that by making one of the descendants of David .been conquered and destroyed

It will be as if I was rebuilding a house after it had been torn **.the king of Israel again**
.**down**

.I will do this so that the rest of the people in the world will want me to be their Lord¹⁷

This will include even the non-Jewish people whom I have chosen to belong to me. You
.**can be certain that this will happen because I, the Lord God, have said that I will do it**

”I told my people long ago that I would do this¹⁸

James continued to speak. He said, “Therefore I think that we should not tell the¹⁹
non-Jewish people who are becoming disciples of Jesus that they have to obey all of our

Instead, we should write a letter to them about only a few²⁰ .Jewish laws and rituals
things. They should not eat meat that people have offered to idols. They should not have
sexual relations with someone to whom they are not married. They should not eat meat
from animals that people have strangled to kill them for butchering. They should not eat or

We should tell the Gentiles not to do these things because they would be²¹ .drink any blood
very offensive to Jews. The laws that Moses wrote forbid these things. Jews would expect
people read those Gentiles to know that God would not want them to do these things because
laws aloud in the Jewish meeting places on every Sabbath day. They have done this in cities
”in many different places for a very long time

The apostles and the elders, along with all the other believers in Jerusalem, agreed²²
with what James said. So they decided that they should choose men from the church in
Jerusalem and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. Those men would let the
believers there know what the leaders at Jerusalem had decided. So they chose Judas the
They²³ .son of Sabbas and Silas. These were both leaders of the believers at Jerusalem
wrote the following letter, which they asked Judas and Silas to take to the believers at
:**Antioch**

We apostles and elders who are your fellow believers send our greetings to you. We“
are writing this to you non-Jewish believers who live in the city of Antioch and other
.**places in the provinces of Syria and Cilicia**

We have heard that some men from our church came to you and taught you things²⁴
that were different from what you learned when you first believed in Jesus. We have
heard that what they told you made you upset. We want you to know that we did not
.**send these men to you**

We met together and we all agreed that it would be good to choose some men and²⁵
ask them to go to you. We are sending them along with Barnabas and Paul, whom we
.**love very much**

Those two have put their lives in danger because they serve our Lord Jesus the²⁶

.Messiah

We have also sent Judas and Silas to you. They will tell you the same things that we²⁷

.are writing

We believe that the Holy Spirit has shown us that we should not require you to obey²⁸
all of the Jewish laws. That would be difficult and unnecessary. Instead, we only require

:you to obey the following instructions

.You should not eat food that people have sacrificed to idols²⁹

.You should not eat or drink any blood

.You should not eat meat from animals that people have killed by strangling them

.You should not have sexual relations with someone to whom you are not married

”.If you avoid doing these things, you will be doing what is right. We wish you well

.Then the apostles and elders sent Barnabas, Paul, Judas, and Silas on their way³⁰

They traveled from the city of Jerusalem to the city of Antioch. They assembled the

When the believers there read the letter, they³¹ .believers there and read the letter to them

Judas and Silas were prophets. They³² .were glad, because its message encouraged them

said many things to encourage the Gentile believers. They helped them to trust in Jesus
.even more

Judas and Silas stayed in Antioch for a long time. Then, when they were ready to³³

But Silas]²³⁴ .return to Jerusalem, the believers at Antioch wished them well and they left

[.thought it would be best for them to stay there. So Judas went back to Jerusalem alone

However, Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch. There they and many others taught³⁵

.the believers and shared the good news about Jesus

After a while Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us go back and visit the believers in every³⁶
city where we previously proclaimed the good news about Jesus. That way we can find out

Barnabas agreed that it³⁷ ”.how well they are continuing to believe in and obey Jesus

But Barnabas said that he wanted to take .**would be good to go back and visit these believers**

However, Paul told³⁸ .John, whose other name was Mark, along with them again
Barnabas that he thought it was a bad idea to take Mark with them. Paul said this because
Mark had left them when they were previously in the region of Pamphylia. Mark had not

Paul and Barnabas strongly disagreed with each other³⁹ .continued to work with them
.about whether they should bring John Mark with them. So they separated from each other
Barnabas went on a journey of his own and took Mark with him. They sailed on a ship to

Paul decided to travel with Silas. The believers in Antioch asked⁴⁰ .the island of Cyprus
Paul traveled⁴¹ .God graciously to help them. Then Paul and Silas departed from Antioch
through the provinces of Syria and Cilicia. In those places, they helped the groups **with Silas**
.of believers to trust in Jesus even more

Paul and Silas went to the cities of Derbe and Lystra and visited the believers¹ **16**
there. Now a believer whose name was Timothy lived in Lystra. His mother was a Jewish
Because this man was .woman who believed in Jesus. His father, however, was a Greek man
The believers in Lystra and Iconium said² .**not Jewish, he did not observe the law of Moses**
Paul wanted to take Timothy with him when he went to other³ .good things about Timothy
places, so he arranged for someone to circumcise Timothy. Paul did that so that the Jews
who lived in those other places would accept Timothy. Those Jews knew that Timothy's
.non-Jewish father would not have circumcised him

So Timothy went with Paul and Silas, and they traveled to many other towns. In each⁴
town they encouraged the believers to do what the apostles and elders in Jerusalem had told
.them to do

They helped the believers in those towns to trust Jesus even more. More people⁵
.became believers every day

Paul and his companions wanted to share the good news about Jesus in the province⁶
of Asia. But the Holy Spirit showed them that he did not want them to do that. So they went
trying to discover where the Holy Spirit ,instead through the regions of Phrygia and Galatia
.They arrived at the border of the province of Mysia⁷ .**wanted them to share the good news**
From there they wanted to go north into the province of Bithynia. But once again the Holy
So they went⁸ .Spirit showed them that he did not want them to share the good news there
That night God gave⁹ .**a city by the sea** ,through the province of Mysia and arrived at Troas
Paul a vision in which he saw a man from the province of Macedonia. That man was
I, Luke, joined Paul and¹⁰ "!"begging Paul, "Come across the sea to Macedonia and help us
After Paul saw that vision, we made arrangements right away to **.his companions in Troas**
travel to Macedonia. We were certain that God had called us to share the good news about
.Jesus with the people there

We got on a boat and sailed from Troas right to the island of Samothrace. The next¹¹
Then we left Neapolis and went to Philippi. It was¹² .day we sailed to the city of Neapolis

.Some ancient manuscripts include verse 34 (See: Acts 15:40) .2

a very important city in the province of Macedonia. Many Roman citizens lived there. We
.decided to stay in Philippi for a while

.On the Sabbath day we went outside the city gate and walked down to the river¹³
we knew that Jewish people would gather to pray at ,**Since there was no synagogue in the city**
a place like that. When we arrived, we saw some women who had gathered to pray. So we
A woman whose name was Lydia was one¹⁴ .sat down and began to tell them about Jesus
of the women who was listening to Paul. She was from the city of Thyatira, She was a
merchant who sold luxurious purple cloth. She believed in the God of Israel and worshiped
and she trusted in ,him. The Lord God enabled her to understand what Paul was saying
,Paul baptized Lydia and the others who lived in her house. Then she said to us¹⁵ .**Jesus**
”.If you recognize that I believe sincerely in Jesus, please come to my house and stay there“
.So we accepted her invitation and stayed at her house

Another day, as we were going to the place where people gathered to pray, we met a¹⁶
young woman who was a slave. An evil spirit was giving her the power to tell what would
happen to people in the future. People paid a lot of money to the men who were her owners

This young woman¹⁷ .so that she would tell them what was going to happen to them
followed Paul and the rest of us everywhere we went. She was continually shouting, “These
men serve the God who is the greatest of all gods! They are telling you how God can save

She continued to do this for many days. Finally, Paul became so upset that he¹⁸ ”!you
turned toward the young woman and spoke to the evil spirit that was in her. He said, “In the
name of Jesus the Messiah, I command you to come out of her!” Immediately the evil spirit

Then her owners realized that she could no longer predict what would happen¹⁹ .left her
to people. That meant she could no longer earn money for them. That made them very
angry. They grabbed Paul and Silas and took them to the open area of the city where its

The owners of the young woman brought²⁰ .**so that the rulers could judge them** rulers were
them to the city rulers. They told them, “These men are Jews, and they are greatly troubling

They are teaching that we should do things that our Roman laws²¹ .the people in our city
Many people in the crowd joined those who were accusing Paul²² ”!do not allow us to do

So the rulers told .**This convinced the Roman rulers that they must be bad men** .and Silas

So the²³ .soldiers to tear the shirts off Paul and Silas and beat them with wooden rods
soldiers beat Paul and Silas badly with rods. After that, they took them and put them into
Because the officials²⁴ .the prison. They told the jailer to make sure they did not get out
had told him to do that, the jailer put Paul and Silas into the room that was farthest inside
the prison. There he made them sit down on the floor and stretch out their legs. Then he
fastened their ankles in holes between two large pieces of wood so that Paul and Silas could
.not move their legs

.About midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and praising God by singing songs²⁵
Suddenly there was a very strong earthquake²⁶ .The other prisoners were listening to them
that shook the whole jail. As soon as the earthquake struck, it caused all of the doors of the
The jailer woke²⁷ .jail to open and all of the chains that fastened the prisoners to fall off
up and saw that the earthquake had opened the doors of the jail. He thought that the
because he knew that ,prisoners had left the jail. So he pulled out his sword to kill himself
Paul saw the jailer and shouted²⁸ .the city rulers would kill him if the prisoners had escaped
The jailer shouted to someone²⁹ ”!to him, “Do not kill yourself! We prisoners are all here
It was midnight and dark, and he wanted to be sure that all the prisoners .to bring torches
The .to the inner cell where he had put Paul and Silas He hurried in .were still in the prison
because the rulers had told him to guard them carefully. When he jailer was shaking with fear
for he knelt down in front of them to honor them ,saw that Paul and Silas were still there
Then he brought Paul and Silas out of the jail. He asked³⁰ .sparing his life by not escaping
They answered, “If you put³¹ ”?them, “Sirs, I want God to save me. What do I need to do
your trust in Jesus as your Lord, God will save you. God will also save everyone in your
”.family if they trust in Jesus

The³² .Then Paul and Silas spoke about Jesus to him and everyone in his family³²
jailer washed their wounds, even though it was the middle of the night. Then right away
Then the jailer brought Paul and³⁴ .Paul and Silas baptized him and everyone in his family
Silas into his house and gave them some food to eat. He and his whole family were all very
.happy because they had believed in God

The next morning, the city rulers told some officers to go to the prison and tell the³⁵
When the jailer heard this, he went and told³⁶ ”!jailer, “Let those two prisoners go now
Paul, “The city rulers have told me to let you go. So you two can leave the prison now. Do
But Paul said to the jailer, with the officers³⁷ ”.not worry, no one will arrest you again
listening, “The city rulers had their soldiers beat us in front of a crowd. Without convicting
us of any crime, they put us in prison. They did those things to us even though we are
Roman citizens. And now they want to send us away without telling anyone! We will not
So the³⁸ ”.accept that! Those city rulers must come themselves and free us from prison
officers went and told the city rulers that Paul and Silas were refusing to leave the prison
unless the rulers came and released them personally. When the city rulers learned that they
They knew that they had done the wrong .were Roman citizens, they became very afraid
So the city³⁹ .thing by beating Roman citizens and putting them in prison without a trial
rulers came to Paul and Silas and told them that they were sorry for what they had done to
.them. The city rulers brought them out of the prison and asked them to leave the city
After Paul and Silas left the prison, they went to Lydia’s house. There they met with her⁴⁰

and the other believers. They encouraged the believers to continue trusting in the Lord
I, Luke, remained there for Jesus. Then Paul, Silas, and Timothy left the city of Philippi
.some time

Paul, Silas, and Timothy traveled through the cities of Amphipolis and¹ 17

Apollonia. Then they came to the city of Thessalonica. There was a Jewish meeting place

On the Sabbath day, Paul went to the meeting place as he usually did. For three² .there
that weeks he went there on each Sabbath day. He proved to the people from the Scriptures
Paul showed very clearly that in the Scriptures the prophets wrote³ .Jesus was the Messiah
that the Messiah would have to die but then become alive again. He said, "I am telling you
Some of the Jews in the synagogue believed what⁴ ".about Jesus. This man is the Messiah
Paul said about Jesus. They began to meet with Paul and Silas. Many non-Jewish people
.who worshiped God and many influential women also believed the message about Jesus
.They too began to meet with Paul and Silas

because so many people were believing But some leaders of the Jews became jealous⁵
So they went to the open area of the city and found some bad men to help .what Paul taught
them. They used those men to gather a crowd and cause a great disturbance in the city. The
crowd ran to the house of a man named Jason, where they thought Paul and Silas were
.staying. They wanted to bring Paul and Silas outside to where the crowd of people was
They discovered that Paul and Silas were not at the house. However, they found Jason⁶
and dragged him and some of the other believers who were with him to where the city
rulers were. They told the rulers, "These men who have been disturbing the way that people
.and this man Jason has invited them to stay at his house⁷ ,live have now come here also
These other men whom we have brought to you are also friendly with them. They are all
disloyal to Caesar our king. They say that another person, whose name is Jesus, is the real
When the city rulers and the crowd of people that had gathered heard that, they⁸ "!king
But .The city rulers made Jason and the other believers pay a fine⁹ .became very upset
they told them that they would give the money back to them if Paul and Silas did not cause any
.Then the city rulers let Jason and the other believers go .more trouble

So that same night, the believers sent Paul and Silas out of Thessalonica to the town¹⁰
.of Berea. When Paul and Silas arrived there, they went to the Jewish meeting place
Most of the Jews in Thessalonica had not been willing to listen to God's message. But¹¹
the Jews who lived in Berea were very willing to listen. They listened carefully to the
message about Jesus. Every day they read the Scriptures for themselves to find out whether
Because of Paul's teaching, many of the Jewish¹² .what Paul said about Jesus was true

people believed in Jesus, and also some of the important non-Jewish women and many
.non-Jewish men believed in him

But then the Jews in Thessalonica heard that Paul was in Berea preaching the¹³
message from God about Jesus. So they went to Berea and said things to the people there
So right away some of the believers in Berea took¹⁴ .that made them very angry with Paul
When¹⁵ .Paul to the seacoast to go to another city. But Silas and Timothy stayed in Berea
Paul and the men who were taking him arrived at the coast, they got on a boat and went to
the city of Athens. Then Paul said to the men who had come with him, “Tell Silas and
Timothy to come to me here in Athens as soon as they can.” Then those men left Athens
.and returned to Berea

In Athens, Paul waited for Silas and Timothy to come. In the meantime, he walked¹⁶
.around in the city. He became very distressed because there were many idols in the city
So Paul went to the Jewish meeting place and talked about Jesus with the Jews there. He¹⁷
also spoke with the Greeks who had accepted what Jews believe. He also went every day to
.the open area of the city and had conversations with the people he met there

Paul met some teachers who liked to talk about what people believe. Some of them¹⁸
called themselves Epicureans, and others called themselves Stoics. They told Paul what
they believed, and they asked him what he believed. Then some of them said to one
another, “He really does not know what he is talking about.” But others said, “He seems to
be teaching a philosophy about some gods that we have never heard of.” Those others said
,that because Paul was telling them that Jesus had died and then had become alive again
.and they thought that Resurrection was the name of a god

So they invited Paul to come with them to the place where the philosophers in the¹⁹
city met. They told Paul, “Please come with us, because we would like to know what this
You are teaching us some things that we²⁰ .new message is that you are teaching people
The people of Athens and the²¹ ”.do not understand. We want to know what they mean
people from other regions who had come to live there greatly enjoyed talking about new
.ideas

The philosophers asked Paul to stand in the middle of their group. He did, and then²²
he said, “People of Athens, I have seen many of the things you do, and I can tell how
I say that because, while I was walking through your city, I saw the²³ .religious you are
:things that you worship, I even saw an altar on which someone had carved these words
THIS HONORS A GOD WHOM WE DO NOT KNOW. So now let me tell you about that
.God whom you worship but whom you do not know

He is the God who made the world and everything in it. He rules over all beings in²⁴
He does not²⁵ .heaven and on earth. He does not live in temples that people have built
need to have people do anything for him. He is the one who makes people alive. He gives
.them everything they need

In the beginning, God created one couple, and from them God produced all the²⁶
people groups that now live everywhere on the earth. God determined where and when
He wanted people to realize that they need him. Then²⁷ .each people group would live
maybe they would look for him and find him. People will find God if they sincerely look
,It is because of God that we live²⁸ .for him, because he is very close to each one of us
' .move, and exist, as one of you has said, 'Because we are his children

Therefore, because we are God's children, we should not think that God is like an²⁹
,In the past³⁰ .idol that a person would design and make out of gold, silver, or stone
people did not know what God wanted them to do. So God did not punish them for what
.they did. But now God commands all people everywhere to stop doing wrong things
God tells us that on a day that he has chosen, he is going to judge all of us justly. God³¹
will have Jesus, the man he has chosen, do the judging. God has made sure that we
".understand this by making Jesus alive again after he died

When the philosophers heard Paul say that a man had become alive again after he³²
had died, some of them laughed at him. But others asked him to come back and tell them
However, some of the³⁴ .After they said that, Paul walked away³³ .about it another day
people went with Paul and believed the message about Jesus. Among those who believed in
Jesus was a man named Dionysius who was a member of the council. Also, there were a
.woman named Damaris and some other people with them who believed

In² .After that, Paul left the city of Athens and went to the city of Corinth¹ 18
Corinth Paul met a Jew whose name was Aquila. He was from the region of Pontus. Aquila
and his wife Priscilla had recently come from the city of Rome in Italy. They left Rome
because Claudius, the Roman emperor, had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul
.introduced himself to Aquila and Priscilla
Aquila and Priscilla made tents to earn money. Paul also made tents. So he stayed with³
.Every Sabbath, Paul went to the Jewish meeting place⁴ .them and they worked together
There he conversed with both Jews and non-Jews. He helped many of them to believe in
.Jesus

When Silas and Timothy arrived from the region of Macedonia, Paul felt strongly that⁵
he should devote all of his time to proclaiming the good news. So he kept telling the Jews

But the Jews argued with Paul and said bad things⁶ .sincerely that Jesus was the Messiah to show that he wanted to have nothing to do about him. So he shook the dust off his clothes He said to them, “If God punishes you, it is your responsibility! I have .with them any more done everything I could to show you the truth! From now on I will talk to people who are So Paul left the Jewish meeting place and went into a house that was next to⁷ ”!not Jewish it, and he preached there. Titius Justus, the owner of the house, was a non-Jewish man who

After that, the ruler of the Jewish meeting place, whose name was⁸ .worshiped God Crispus, and all of his family believed in Jesus. Many other people in Corinth heard about .Crispus and his family. They also believed in Jesus and Paul baptized them

One night Paul had a vision in which Jesus spoke to him. He said, “Do not be afraid⁹ You can keep speaking¹⁰ .Keep telling people about me .of the people who are against you because I will help you. No one will be able to attack you and hurt you, because confidently So Paul stayed in¹¹ ”.and will defend you there are many people in this city who love me .Corinth for a year and a half. He shared the good news about Jesus with the people there

.Then a man named Gallio became the Roman governor of the province of Achaia¹² .got together and seized Paul thought he would take their side so they The Jewish leaders They said, “This¹³ .They brought him to the governor and made accusations against him Paul¹⁴ ”.man is teaching people to worship God in ways that Roman law does not permit was about to say something to defend himself. But Gallio said to the Jewish leaders, “If this man had done something terribly wrong that broke our Roman laws, naturally I would

However, you are only complaining about¹⁵ .listen to what you Jews want to tell me things that Paul has been saying. You are arguing about who deserves what name. These are disputes about your own Jewish laws. So you must settle this yourselves. These are not the After Gallio said that, he told some soldiers to¹⁶ ”!kind of things that deserve my attention

But instead of leaving right away, the Jewish¹⁷ .make the Jewish leaders leave the court .leaders grabbed the man who was in charge of their synagogue. His name was Sosthenes because they thought Paul had They beat him right there in front of the judge’s seat .Gallio did nothing to stop them .persuaded him to believe in Jesus

Paul stayed with the believers in Corinth for many more days. Then he got on a ship¹⁸ Paul left Silas and Timothy in .with Priscilla and Aquila and sailed for the province of Syria They¹⁹ .He got his hair cut off in Cenchrea because of a vow that he had made .Corinth .arrived at the city of Ephesus, and Priscilla and Aquila stayed there

Paul himself entered the Jewish meeting place and had conversations with the Jews .They asked him to stay longer, but he told them that he could not stay²⁰ .there about Jesus

But as Paul left, he told the Jews in Ephesus, “I promise that I will come back if God²¹
wants me to.” Then Paul got on a ship and sailed away from Ephesus

When the ship came to the city of Caesarea, Paul got off. He went from there to²²
Jerusalem and visited with the believers there. Then he returned to the city of Antioch
where he had begun his trip

Paul remained for some time with the believers in Antioch. Then he left and traveled²³
to many cities in the regions of Galatia and Phrygia. He helped the believers in each city to
believe more steadfastly in Jesus

While Paul was going through Galatia and Phrygia, a Jewish man named Apollos²⁴
came to Ephesus. He was from the city of Alexandria, and he spoke very well. He had
Other believers had taught Apollos how Jesus wanted²⁵ carefully studied the Scriptures
people to live. He enthusiastically taught those things correctly to the people in Ephesus
However, he was not teaching everything about Jesus. He only knew that John the Baptizer
Apollos went²⁶ had said to repent and receive baptism to get ready for Jesus the Messiah
to the Jewish meeting place and told the people there the things he had learned about Jesus
When Priscilla and Aquila heard what he taught, they asked him to come to their home
There they taught him more about Jesus

When Apollos decided that he would like to go to the region of Achaia, the believers²⁷
in Ephesus told him that it would be good for him to do that. So they wrote a letter to the
believers in Achaia saying that they should welcome Apollos. After he got there, he did
The leaders of the²⁸ much to help those whom God had kindly enabled to believe in Jesus
Jews were denying that Jesus was the Messiah. But as many other people listened, Apollos
showed convincingly that they were wrong. He did that by proving from the Scriptures that
Jesus was the Messiah

finished visiting the While Apollos was still in the city of Corinth, Paul¹ 19
traveled through the province of Asia and came to churches in Phrygia and Galatia. Then he
He² the city of Ephesus. There he met some people who said that they were believers
asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed God’s message?” They
So Paul³ answered, “No, we did not. We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit
asked, “So when someone baptized you, what did you know?” They replied, “We believed
Paul said, “John’s baptism was a sign that people were⁴ what John the Baptizer taught
giving up their evil thoughts and deeds and wanting to obey God. But John also told people
that the Messiah would soon appear and that they should believe in him. He was talking
When those men heard that, they believed in Jesus as the Messiah. Paul⁵ about Jesus

After that, Paul placed his hands on their⁶ .then baptized them because they believed heads one by one, and each of them received the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gave them power to speak in languages that they had not learned. They also spoke messages that the There were about 12 men whom Paul baptized and who received⁷ .Holy Spirit gave them .the Holy Spirit

For three months after that, Paul went to the Jewish meeting place in Ephesus on each⁸ Sabbath and preached there. He taught the people convincingly about how God should rule But some of the Jews would not believe the message and did not want to hear⁹ .their lives it any more. In front of everyone in the synagogue, they said bad things about believing in Jesus. So Paul left them and took the believers with him to meet every day in a large room

For two years Paul¹⁰ .where a man whose name was Tyrannus usually taught people taught people there. In this way, most of the Jews and non-Jews who lived in the region of .Asia heard the message about Jesus

If those who were sick could¹² .God also gave Paul the power to do great miracles¹¹ not come to Paul, people would take pieces of cloth that Paul had touched and place them on the sick people. When they did this, the sick people would become well and the evil .spirits would leave them

There were some Jews who traveled from place to place, commanding the evil¹³ spirits in those places to depart from people. Some of them tried to make evil spirits come out of people by commanding them to leave by the authority of Jesus. When those Jews were with a person who had an evil spirit, one of them would say, “I command you to come ,Specifically¹⁴ ”!out by the authority of the man named Jesus whom Paul teaches about there were seven men who were doing this. They were the sons of a Jewish man named One day two of the sons of Sceva were in the house of a man¹⁵ .Sceva, who was a chief priest ,Instead .who had an evil spirit. They tried to make the spirit come out. But it did not come out the evil spirit said to them, “I know Jesus, and I know Paul, but no one has given you suddenly it made the ,After the evil spirit said that¹⁶ ”!authority to make me leave this man man jump on them. He knocked down these two sons of Sceva and hurt them. He tore off Soon¹⁷ .to save their lives their clothes and wounded them. They ran out of the house people throughout Ephesus, both Jews and non-Jews, heard what had happened. They realized that they should regard Jesus with great awe, and they spoke of him very .respectfully

At that time, many people in the group of believers came to their leaders. While¹⁸ .other believers were listening, they told about the evil things that they had been doing Now many of the believers had been sorcerers. They took their scrolls that told about¹⁹

spells and curses and burned them in a place where everyone could see them. The believers added up how much the scrolls were worth. They were worth 50,000 silver coins

In this powerful way, many people heard the message about Jesus and believed in²⁰ him

And after all of this happened, the Holy Spirit led Paul to decide to go to Jerusalem²¹ Paul planned to visit the believers in the regions of Macedonia and Achaia first. He said So Paul sent two of his²² "After I have been to Jerusalem, I must also go to Rome" helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to the province of Macedonia. But he stayed for a while in the city of Ephesus in the province of Asia

But soon after that, people in Ephesus began to make a great amount of trouble²³

This happened because of a man in²⁴ because of Jesus and the teaching about him Ephesus whose name was Demetrius. He was a craftsman who worked with silver metal He made statues of the goddess Artemis out of silver. Demetrius paid a lot of money to the workers who made these idols

Demetrius called together the craftsmen and the workers who made the idols. He²⁵ But you know²⁶ said to them, "You all know that we make a lot of money doing our work very well that Paul has led many people in Ephesus not to buy the statues that we make. In fact, the people from many other towns in our province no longer want to buy what we and that we should not make. Paul tells people that the gods that we make are not gods

there is a risk that we will go out of ,If people keep listening to Paul²⁷ worship them business. Even worse, people will no longer come to the temple of our great goddess Artemis. They will not believe that she is worthy to worship. They will believe that she is not a goddess at all. Yet people throughout the province of Asia and even the whole world

Then all the people there became very angry at Paul when they heard²⁸ "worship her what Demetrius said. They began to shout, "The goddess Artemis of the Ephesians is This shouting made the people in the city very confused. They ran as a crowd to²⁹ "great Gaius and Aristarchus, two men from .to try to find out what was happening the city stadium

Macedonia who traveled with Paul, were out in the city. Some people took hold of them Now Paul wanted to go into the stadium to talk to the³⁰ and dragged them to the stadium Also, some city rulers³¹ people. However, the other believers would not let him go there who were friends of Paul heard what was happening. They sent someone to warn Paul not to go into the theater

In the stadium, the people were very confused. Because they were confused, some³² were shouting one thing while others were shouting something else. But most of them did

Then some of the Jews in the stadium³³ !not even know why they were all in the stadium pushed a man whose name was Alexander to the front of the crowd so that he could speak to the people. Some of the others there told him how he could do that. So Alexander put his hands up to get the crowd to stop shouting. He wanted to tell them that the Jews had not .But many of the non-Jewish people knew that Alexander was a Jew³⁴ .caused the trouble So for two hours the non-Jews .They knew that the Jews did not worship the goddess Artemis ”!shouted together, “Great is the goddess Artemis of the Ephesians

Then one of the city rulers made the crowd stop shouting. He said to them, “My³⁵ fellow citizens, you do not need to be concerned about the worship of Artemis. People throughout the world know that our city of Ephesus is a special place where the goddess !Artemis has her temple. Indeed, the sacred image of her fell down to us from heaven .These are established facts. So you should be quiet now. Do not do anything foolish³⁶ You should not have brought these two men here. They work together with Paul, but³⁷ they have not done anything evil. They have not gone into our temples and taken things If Demetrius and his fellow³⁸ .from there, and they have not spoken evil of our goddess .workmen want to accuse anyone of doing anything bad, they should do it in the right way .The courts are in session. There are judges present whom the government has appointed And if you are concerned about³⁹ .They can present their case before the judges in court You⁴⁰ .anything else, you should ask your rulers about it when those rulers meet together should really not have rushed here shouting, because the Roman government may accuse us of having a riot today. If the rulers ask me what you were all shouting about, I will not That is what the city ruler⁴¹ ”.know how to answer them. There was no good reason for it .and they did go to their homes ,said to the crowd. Then he told them all to go home

Then, after the people at Ephesus had stopped rioting, Paul called the¹ 20 believers together. He urged them to continue to trust in the Lord Jesus. Soon after that, he Then Paul traveled through² .told them goodbye and left to go to the region of Macedonia Macedonia and said many things to encourage the believers there. Then he continued on to Paul then stayed in Greece for three months. He planned to return to Syria by³ .Greece ship. But he heard that some of the Jews there were planning to kill him as he traveled. So Now the men who⁴ .he decided to travel by land. Once again he went through Macedonia were going to travel with him to Jerusalem were Sopater, the son of Pyrrhus, from the town of Berea; Aristarchus and Secundus, who were from the city of Thessalonica; Gaius, who was from the city of Derbe; Timothy, who was from the region of Galatia; and Tychicus I, Luke, joined Paul when he came⁵ .and Trophimus, who were from the province of Asia Now the other seven men sailed to the city of Troas before .back through the city of Philippi

But Paul and I stayed in the city of Philippi⁶ .we did, so they waited there for the two of us until the end of the festival when Jewish people eat bread without yeast. Then we got on a ship that was going to the city of Troas. After five days we arrived there and met the other .men who had traveled ahead of us. We all stayed in Troas for seven days

While we were in Troas, we gathered together on the first day of the week to share a⁷ **We met on that day because it was the day when Jesus became** .meal with the other believers Paul was planning to leave Troas the next day, so when he spoke to .**alive again after he died** We had gathered⁸ .the believers, he spoke for a long time. He kept speaking until midnight Now a young man whose name⁹ .in an upstairs room. Many oil lamps were burning there was Eutychus was in the room. He was seated on the sill of an open window. As Paul continued talking for a long time, Eutychus became sleepier and sleepier. Finally, he was sound asleep. He slipped out of the window and fell three stories down to the ground. Some Paul also¹⁰ .of the believers went down immediately and picked him up. But he was dead went down. He lay down and stretched out on top of the young man. He also put his arms around him. Then he said to the people who were standing around, “Do not worry, because Then Paul went back up to the room where he was meeting with the¹¹ ”!he is alive again ,believers. They shared a meal together. Afterwards he talked at length with the believers Before Paul left, the believers brought the young¹² .until the sun came up. Then he left man who had fallen out the window back to the meeting. Everyone there was extremely .encouraged to see that he was alive again

We then went to the ship. But Paul did not get on the ship with us in Troas, because¹³ he wanted to walk by himself to the town of Assos. So the rest of us got on the ship and And when we met Paul in¹⁴ .sailed for Assos. We planned to bring Paul on board there The day after we¹⁵ .Assos, he got on the ship with us and we sailed to the city of Mitylene reached Mitylene, we sailed from there and arrived at a place near the island of Chios. The day after that, we sailed to the island of Samos. The next day we left Samos and sailed to Paul did not want to have a delay in Asia. So he had decided we¹⁶ .the city of Miletus should go to Miletus, south of Ephesus and past its harbor. He was trying to travel quickly ,because he wanted to arrive in Jerusalem, if possible, by the time of the Pentecost festival .and it was almost time for that festival

So when the ship arrived at Miletus, Paul sent a messenger to Ephesus to ask the¹⁷ .elders of the group of believers there to come to talk with him

When the elders came to him, Paul said to them, “You know very well how I acted¹⁸ among you the entire time that I was with you, from the first day when I arrived here in the I kept serving Jesus very humbly and **You know how**¹⁹ .until the day I left province of Asia

how I suffered because the Jews who were not **You also know** .how I sometimes wept when I preached God's message to ,that **You also know**²⁰ .believers often tried to harm me

I taught you God's **You know that** .I never left out anything that would help you ,you message when many people were present, and I also went to your homes and taught you I preached both to Jews and to non-Jews. I told them all that they must stop their²¹ .there
".sinful behavior and start obeying God. They must believe in our Lord Jesus

And now, I want you to know, I am going to Jerusalem. I am going because the²²
Holy Spirit has clearly shown me that I must go there, and I must obey him. I do not know But I do know that in each city I have visited, the²³ .exactly what will happen to me there Holy Spirit has told me that in Jerusalem people will put me in prison and will cause me to But I do not care even if people kill me, so long as I am first able to finish the²⁴ .suffer work that the Lord Jesus has told me to do. He told me to tell people the good news that

I have preached to you the²⁵ .God saves us by doing for us what we do not deserve message that God is reigning as king. But now, I must tell you, I know that today is the last So I want you all to understand right²⁶ .time that you fellow believers will ever see me now that if anyone who has heard me preach dies without trusting in Jesus, it is not my

.**about how he saves us** After all, I have told you everything that God has revealed²⁷ ,fault You leaders must continue to believe and obey God's message, and you must also help²⁸
all the other believers to do the same. The Holy Spirit has given you the responsibility of caring for them. Jesus died on the cross to make those who believe in him his own special I know very well that after I leave, people who teach lies will come among you²⁹ .people

Even some leaders from your own group will³⁰ and will do great harm to the believers start teaching believers the wrong things. They will teach those wrong things to try to get

So be careful that all of you keep believing the true message³¹ .disciples of their own about Jesus! Remember that throughout the three years I was with you, I warned each one
".of you consistently and very sincerely that you should stay faithful to Jesus

And now as I leave you, I ask God to protect you and help you to keep believing³²
the message that he saves us by doing for us what we do not deserve. If you continue believing that message, it will make you strong, and God will give you the good things that
.he has promised to all of those who belong to him

You certainly³⁴ .As for me, I never tried to get money or fine clothing from anyone³³
In³⁵ .know that I worked with my hands to earn the money that my helpers and I needed everything that I did, I showed you that we should work hard in order to have enough money to give some to those who are needy. We should remember that our Lord Jesus himself said, 'A person is happier when he gives to others than when he receives from
"" .them

.When Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of the elders and prayed³⁶
They were very sad³⁸ .They all cried a lot, and they hugged Paul and kissed him³⁷
because he had said that they would never see him again. Then they all went with him to
.the ship

Then, after we said goodbye to the elders from Ephesus, we got back onto the¹ **21**
The next .There the ship stopped for the night .ship and sailed directly to the island of Cos
.There the ship stopped again .day we sailed in the ship from Cos to the island of Rhodes
.The ship was going no farther than that .The day after that, we went to the town of Patara
but we learned that there was another ship that would be ,At Patara we left that ship²
.leaving soon and going to the region of Phoenicia. So we got on that ship, and it left
Now as we traveled across the sea, we saw the island of Cyprus. We sailed to the south of³
that island. We continued sailing until we arrived at the city of Tyre in the province of
Syria. The ship had to stay there for several days because its workers needed to unload the
.cargo

But we learned where the believers in Tyre lived, so we went and stayed with them⁴
for seven days. God's Spirit revealed to some of the believers that Paul would suffer if he
But when it was time for the⁵ .went to Jerusalem. So they encouraged Paul not to go there
,ship to leave again, we prepared to continue on our way to Jerusalem. When we left Tyre
all the men and their wives and children went with us to the edge of the sea. We all knelt
Then we all said goodbye to each other. We who⁶ .down there on the sand and prayed
were traveling with Paul got onto the ship with him, and the other believers returned to
.where they lived in Tyre

After we left Tyre, we continued on that ship to the city of Ptolemais. There were⁷
Then, on the next⁸ .believers there, and we greeted them and stayed with them that night
day, we left Ptolemais and sailed to the city of Caesarea. There we went to visit Philip. He
had a reputation for telling others how to become disciples of Jesus. He was one of the
seven men whom the believers in Jerusalem had chosen to take care of the widows. He
Now he had four daughters who were not married. Each of⁹ .invited us to stay in his home
.them frequently spoke messages that the Holy Spirit gave them

And after we had been in Philip's house for several days, a believer whose name¹⁰
was Agabus arrived in Caesarea from the district of Judea. He frequently spoke messages
Coming over to where we were, he removed the belt from¹¹ .that the Holy Spirit gave him
,Paul's waist. He tied his own feet and hands with it. Then he said, "The Holy Spirit says
The Jewish leaders in Jerusalem will tie up the hands and feet of the owner of this belt like'

When the¹² ”.this. Then they will ask the non-Jewish people to arrest him as a criminal
rest of us heard that, we and the other believers there pled with Paul, “Please do not go up
But Paul replied, “Please stop crying and trying to discourage me from¹³ ”!to Jerusalem
going! You should not cry, because I am willing to go to prison and also to die in Jerusalem
Then we realized that Paul was determined to go to¹⁴ ”.because I serve the Lord Jesus
Jerusalem. So we did not try any longer to stop him. We said, “May the Lord’s will be
”!done

Then, after those days in Caesarea, we prepared our possessions and left to go by¹⁵
Now some of the believers from Caesarea also went with us. They¹⁶ .land to Jerusalem
took us to stay in the house of a man whose name was Mnason. He was from the island of
Cyprus. He had believed in Jesus when people were first beginning to hear the message
.about him

.And when we arrived in Jerusalem, a group of the believers greeted us happily¹⁷
He was the main .Then, the next day, Paul and the rest of us went to speak with James¹⁸
So¹⁹ .All of the other leaders were also there .**leader of the group of believers in Jerusalem**
Paul greeted them, and then he told them all of the things that God had enabled him to do
And when they heard what God had done, James and the²⁰ .among the non-Jewish people
other elders thanked God. Then one of them said to Paul, “Brother, you know that there are
very many thousands of us Jewish people who have believed in the Lord Jesus. You also
But people²¹ .know that we continue very carefully to obey the laws that Moses gave us
have told our fellow Jewish believers that when you are with non-Jews, you tell the Jewish
believers who live among them that they should stop obeying the laws of Moses. People
say that you tell those Jewish believers not to circumcise their sons and not to practice our
But our fellow²² .**We do not believe that they are telling the truth about you** .other customs
They will be angry .Jewish believers will surely learn that you have come here to Jerusalem
So you need to do something to show .**with you because of what they have heard about you**
So please do what we suggest to²³ .them that what they have heard about you is not true
Go with these men to²⁴ .you. There are four men among us who have made a vow to God
the temple courts and do the ceremonies that are necessary for you and for them to be able
to worship in the temple. Then, when it is time for them to offer the sacrifices that they
need to offer because they have made these vows, pay for what they offer. After that, they
.can shave their heads to show that they have done what they promised God they would do
When people see you in the courts of the temple with those men, they will know that what
people have told them about you is not true. Instead, they will know that you obey all our
Now as for the non-Jewish believers, we elders here in Jerusalem talked²⁵ .Jewish laws
about which of our laws they should obey. We wrote them a letter telling them what we

decided. We wrote that they should not eat meat that people have offered as a sacrifice to any idol. They should not eat any blood. They should not eat meat from animals that people have killed by strangling them. We also told them that they should not have sexual relations
”.with someone to whom they are not married

The next day he took **.Paul agreed to do what James and the other leaders asked him to do**²⁶
the four men and together they did the ceremonies that were necessary for them to worship in the temple. After that, Paul went to the temple courts and told the priests that these men had done everything they had promised God they would do. He told the priests that they just needed to offer the sacrifices that the law required. Paul kept going to the temple courts
 .with the men until each one of them had offered the necessary sacrifices

Now it took seven days for the ceremonies that allowed the men to return to their²⁷
regular lives after their vows. Near the end of that time, some Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul in the temple courtyard. They were very upset with him, and they made many other Jews who were there upset with Paul as well. The Jews from Asia grabbed on
They shouted, “Fellow Israelites, come and help us to punish this man! This is²⁸ .to Paul the one who is teaching people wherever he goes that the Jewish people are not special. He teaches people that they should no longer obey the laws of Moses and that they do not need
 ,to respect this temple. He has even brought non-Jews here into the court of our temple
They said these things because they had²⁹ ”!causing this holy place to become polluted
 .seen Paul walking around in Jerusalem with Trophimus. He was a non-Jew from Ephesus
These Jews **.The Jews did not permit non-Jews to be in certain parts of the temple courtyard**
from the province of Asia thought that Paul had brought Trophimus into the temple
People all over the city heard that there was trouble at the temple³⁰ .courtyard that day
courtyard and they came running there. The crowd seized Paul and dragged him outside of the temple area. The temple guards quickly shut the gates to the temple courtyard so that
 .the people could not do anything violent inside the temple area

While they were trying to kill Paul, someone ran to the fortress near the temple and³¹
 .told the Roman commander that many people in Jerusalem were rioting at the temple
The commander quickly gathered some officers and a large group of soldiers. They ran³²
down the fortress steps to the temple area where the crowd was. When the crowd of people
 ,who were yelling at Paul and beating him saw the commander and the soldiers coming
 .they stopped beating him

Then the commander came to where Paul was and took hold of him. He commanded³³
 ,soldiers to fasten a chain to each of Paul’s arms. Then he asked the people in the crowd
But some of the many people there were³⁴ ”?Who is this man, and what has he done“
shouting one thing and some were shouting something else. And because the situation was so confused, the commander could not find out who Paul was. So he commanded that Paul

be taken into the fortress that was connected with the temple court so that he could question

The soldiers led Paul to the steps of the fortress. But many people followed³⁵ him there them, still trying to kill Paul. So the commander told the soldiers to carry Paul up the steps The commander knew that Paul was in danger because the crowd that³⁶ into the fortress "was following the soldiers kept shouting, "Kill him! Kill him

to the in Greek And as the soldiers were about to bring Paul into the fortress, he said³⁷ commander, "May I speak with you?" And the commander said, "I am surprised that you

That must mean that you are that man from Egypt who rebelled³⁸ !can speak Greek against the Roman government not long ago. He took 4,000 violent men with him out into Paul said in reply, "I am a Jew. I was born in³⁹ ".so that we could not catch him the desert Tarsus, which is an important city in the province of Cilicia. I request that you let me speak Then the commander permitted Paul to speak. So Paul stood on the steps⁴⁰ ".to the people that led up to the fortress. He motioned with his hand for the crowd to be quiet. And after the people in the crowd became very quiet, Paul spoke to them in their own Hebrew .language

Paul said, "Jewish elders and my fellow Jews, please listen to me now while I¹ 22

When the crowd of people heard Paul speaking to them in² ".answer your accusations ,their own Hebrew language, they became even quieter and listened. Then Paul said to them ,I am a Jew, as are all of you. I come from the city of Tarsus in the province of Cilicia"³ but I grew up here in Jerusalem. When I was young, I learned the laws that Moses gave to our ancestors. Gamaliel was my teacher, and he taught me very accurately. I have obeyed those laws because I have wanted to obey God. I am sure that all of you here also obey That is why I tried to arrest those who believed the message of God about⁴ .those laws Jesus. I even looked for ways to kill them. Whenever I found men or women who believed The high priest⁵ .the message, I arrested them and had the authorities put them in jail knows this, and so do the other men who belong to our Jewish council. They gave me letters to take to their fellow Jews in the city of Damascus. Those letters gave me the power I could then take them as .who believed in Jesus to go there and arrest people in that city .prisoners to Jerusalem so that the Jewish authorities could punish them

So I went to Damascus. About noon, as I got near to Damascus, suddenly a bright⁶ .I fell to the ground The light was so bright that⁷ .light from the sky flashed all around me !It said, 'Saul! Saul .from up in the sky Then I heard the voice of someone speaking to me And I answered, 'Who are you, Lord?' He replied, 'I am⁸ '!'Stop doing things to hurt me Now the men who were traveling with me⁹ '.Jesus of Nazareth, the one you are hurting Then¹⁰ .saw the bright light, but they did not understand what the voice was saying to me

I asked, ‘Lord, what do you want me to do?’ And the Lord told me, ‘Get up and go into Damascus. A man there will tell you all that I have planned for you to do could not see, because that bright light had caused me to become blind. So the men who were with me took me by the hand and led me to Damascus. Then a man whose name was Ananias came to see me. He was a man who honored God and obeyed the Jewish laws. He came and stood beside me. He said to me, ‘Saul, my friend, see again!’ Instantly I could see and I saw him standing beside me. Then he said: ‘The God whom we worship and whom our ancestors worshiped has chosen you for a special purpose. He will show you what he wants you to do. You have heard him gloriously alive again, do. He has allowed you to see Jesus the Messiah. He wants you to tell people everywhere what you have seen and speak to you yourself. So please do not delay! Let me baptize you right now. Pray to the Lord, heard from him!’!Jesus and ask God to forgive you for your sins

Then later I returned to Jerusalem. One day I went to the temple courtyard and, In my vision I saw Jesus as he said to me while I was praying there, I saw a vision. Leave Jerusalem quickly, because the people here will not believe what you tell them. But I said to him, ‘Lord, they know that I went from one synagogue to another looking for people who believed in you. I was putting them in jail, and I was even beating them. They remember that when people killed Stephen because he said you were the Messiah, I stood there watching and approving of what they were doing. I even guarded the outer clothes that those who were murdering him had thrown aside. But Jesus said to me, ‘Leave Jerusalem, because I am going to send you far away from here to tell non-Jews about me

The people listened to what Paul was saying until he talked about Jesus sending him to non-Jews. Then they began shouting, “Kill him! A man like him does not deserve to live. And while they were shouting, they took off their robes and threw dirt into any longer. So the commander told his soldiers to take Paul into the fortress. He told them to whip Paul to make him admit what he had done that had made the Jews so angry with him. So the commander told his soldiers to take Paul into the fortress. He told them to whip Paul to make him admit what he had done that had made the Jews so angry with him. Then they stretched his arms out and tied them so that they could whip him on his back. But Paul said to the officer near him, “You will be acting unlawfully if you whip me. I am a Roman citizen, and no one has declared me guilty of anything that, he went to the commander and reported it to him. He said to the commander, “This man is a Roman citizen! Surely you would not command us to whip him. He went into the prison and said to Paul, “Tell me, are you really a Roman citizen?” Paul answered, “Yes, I am. I paid a lot of money to become a Roman citizen.” But

The soldiers were about to²⁹ .Paul said, “I have been a Roman citizen for my whole life whip Paul and to ask him questions about what he had done. But when they heard what .Paul said, they immediately backed away from him. The commander also became afraid He knew that Paul was a Roman citizen and that he had broken the law when he .commanded the soldiers to tie up Paul’s hands

The commander still wanted to know for sure why the Jews were accusing Paul. So³⁰ the next day he told the soldiers to take the chains off Paul. He also called the chief priests and the other council members to meet. Then he brought Paul down the stairway to the temple courts. He took him to where the council was meeting and told him to stand in front .of them

,So Paul looked at the Jewish council members and said, “My fellow Jews¹ 23 throughout my life I have lived respecting our God. I do not know of anything that I have When Ananias the high priest heard what Paul said, he told² .done that I knew was wrong ,Then Paul said to Ananias³ .the men who were standing near Paul to hit him on the mouth God will punish you for that, you hypocrite! You sit there and judge me, using the laws“ that God gave Moses. But you yourself disobey those laws! You commanded those men to But the men who were⁴ ”!strike me without proving that I have done anything wrong Paul⁵ ”!standing near Paul said to him, “You should not speak badly to God’s high priest I did not know that the man who told .I am sorry that I said that ,replied, “My fellow Jews If I had known that, I would not have talked badly .one of you to hit me was the high priest I know that we can read in the Law of Moses, ‘Do not speak badly about any of .about him ””.your leaders

Now Paul knew that some of the council members were Sadducees and others were⁶ Pharisees. So he called out in the council hall, “My fellow Jews, I am a Pharisee. My ancestors have been Pharisees as well. You have put me on trial here because I am sure that And when he said that, the⁷ .one day God will cause those who have died to live again about whether people who have Pharisees and Sadducees started to argue with one another They⁸ .The two groups strongly disagreed with each other .died will become alive again disagreed so strongly because Sadducees do not believe that after people die, they will .become alive again. They also do not believe that there are angels or other kinds of spirits Then both groups started shouting at one another⁹ .But Pharisees do believe those things as they argued. Some of the teachers of the law who were Pharisees stood up. One of them insisted, “We think that this man has done nothing wrong. We believe that an angel or some Then the Pharisees¹⁰ ”!So we must all agree that he is innocent .other spirit spoke to him and Sadducees became very violent with one another. The commander became concerned

that they would hurt Paul badly. So he told soldiers to come down from the fortress into the temple courtyard. He told them to take Paul away from the council members and bring him .up into the barracks

!That night, Paul saw Jesus come and stand near him. Jesus said to him, “Be brave¹¹
You have told people here in Jerusalem about me. I will protect you so that you can tell
”.people in Rome about me too

The next morning some of the Jews who hated Paul met and talked about how to kill¹²
him. To make sure that they killed him, they all promised that they would not eat or drink
anything before they had killed Paul. They asked God to kill them if they did not do what
They¹⁴ .Now there were more than 40 men who agreed to kill Paul¹³ .they promised
went to the chief priests and Jewish elders and told them, “God has heard us promise that
So to help us, we request¹⁵ .we will not eat or drink anything before we have killed Paul
that you go to the commander and ask him, on behalf of the whole Jewish council, to bring
Paul down from the fortress to meet with you again. Tell the commander that you want to
”.talk to Paul some more. We will be waiting to kill Paul while he is on the way here

But the son of Paul’s sister heard what they were planning to do, so he went into the¹⁶
When Paul heard about the plan to kill him, he called one of the¹⁷ .fortress and told Paul
officers and said to him, “Please take this young man to the commander. He needs to tell
So the officer took Paul’s nephew to the commander. The officer told¹⁸ ”.him something
,the commander, “Paul, whom we are guarding here, asked to speak with me. He said
Please take this young man to the commander, because he needs to tell him something‘
So the commander took Paul’s nephew by the hand and led him off by¹⁹ ”.important
Then Paul’s nephew²⁰ ”?himself. Then he asked him, “What do you have to tell me
replied, “There are some Jews who are going to ask you tomorrow to bring Paul down from
the fortress to meet with their council again. They will say that they want to ask him some
So do not do what they ask you to do. There are²¹ .But that is not true .more questions
actually more than 40 Jewish men who will be hiding and waiting to kill Paul when he
passes by on his way to the council. They have even promised God that they will not eat or
drink anything until they have killed Paul. They are ready to do it. They are just waiting for
The commander warned Paul’s nephew, “Do²² ”.you to agree to do what they are asking
.not tell anyone that you have told me about their plan.” Then he sent him away

Then the commander called two of his officers and told them, “Get a group of 200²³
soldiers ready to travel. Take along 70 soldiers riding horses and 200 other soldiers carrying
spears. All of you must be ready to leave at nine o’clock tonight and go to the city of
Take along horses for Paul to ride, and escort him to the palace of Governor²⁴ .Caesarea

Then the commander wrote a letter to send to the governor. This is what he²⁵ ".Felix
Your Excellency, Governor Felix, this is Claudius Lysias writing to you. I send"²⁶ :wrote
I am sending you a man whose name is Paul. Certain Jews had seized²⁷ .you my greetings
him and were about to kill him. But I learned that he was a Roman citizen, so I and my
I wanted to know what those Jews were saying that he²⁸ .soldiers went and rescued him
I listened while they asked this²⁹ .had done wrong, so I took him to their Jewish council
man questions and he answered them. The accusations they made against him had to do
with their Jewish laws. But Paul has not disobeyed any of our Roman laws. So our officials
Then someone told me that some³⁰ .should not execute him or even put him in prison
Jews were planning to kill this man. So I sent him to you right away so that you could give
him a fair trial there. I have also commanded the Jews who have accused him to go there to
".Caesarea and tell you why they are accusing him. Goodbye

So the soldiers did what the commander told them. They got Paul and took him with³¹
The next day, the foot soldiers returned to³² .them during the night to the city of Antipatris
.Jerusalem and the soldiers who rode horses continued traveling to Caesarea with Paul
When the soldiers who rode horses arrived in the city of Caesarea, they gave the letter to³³
So the governor read the letter. Then he³⁴ .the governor and they brought Paul to him
Then³⁵ ".asked Paul, "What province are you from?" Paul answered, "I am from Cilicia
the governor said, "When the people who have accused you arrive, I will listen to what
each of you says and then I will judge your case." Then he commanded his soldiers to
.guard Paul in the palace that King Herod the Great had built

Then, five days after the Roman soldiers brought Paul to Caesarea, the Jewish¹ 24
high priest Ananias traveled there from Jerusalem. He brought some other Jewish elders
with him. They also brought a man who spoke well and knew the Roman laws well. His
name was Tertullus. The Jewish leaders wanted him to persuade the governor that he
So the governor commanded his soldiers to bring Paul in. When Paul² .should punish Paul
,arrived, Tertullus started arguing that Felix should punish him. He said to the governor
During the time that you have ruled us, we have lived well. By planning wisely, you have"
,Therefore, Honorable Governor Felix³ .made many things better for our Jewish people
we continually thank you for everything that you have done for us, wherever you have done
But so that I do not use too much of your time, I will speak briefly. Please⁴ .those things
Now⁵ .listen to what I have to say. I know you will make the right decision about this case
we can assure you that this man causes trouble wherever he goes. He encourages all the
Jews to rebel against you Romans. He leads a radical group within Judaism. The members
He even tried to make our temple in⁶ .of that group call themselves the Nazarenes

And we wanted to judge him] ³.Jerusalem no longer holy. And that is why we arrested him
But Lysias, the commander of the Roman fortress, came with his ⁴⁷ .according to our law
sending us to you.] If you question him yourself ⁵⁸ ,soldiers and took him away from us
about all these matters, you will be able to learn that everything I am saying about him is
Then the Jewish leaders who had come to Caesarea accused Paul too. They insisted⁹ ”.true
.that what Tertullus said about him was true

Then the governor signaled with his hand that he wanted Paul to speak. So Paul¹⁰
spoke to defend himself. He said, “Governor Felix, I know that you have governed this
because I Jewish province for many years. Therefore I am eager to defend myself to you
You can easily confirm that I went¹¹ .know that you will listen to me and will judge me fairly
No one can say truthfully that they saw¹² .to Jerusalem to worship God just 12 days ago
me arguing with anyone in the temple courts, because I did not do that. No one can say
truthfully that they saw me causing people to riot in any Jewish synagogue or causing
So they cannot prove to¹³ .trouble anywhere else in Jerusalem, because I did not do that
But I admit to you that this is true: I¹⁴ .you the things of which they are now accusing me
live as Jesus taught us to live. They claim that makes me different from other Jews, but that
is how I obey the God whom our Jewish ancestors worshiped. I also believe everything that
Moses wrote in the laws that God gave him and everything that the prophets wrote in their
I believe, just as these men also believe, that some day God will cause everyone¹⁵ .books
who has died to live again. God will do this both for those who were good and for those
Because I believe that day will come, I always try to do what pleases¹⁶ .who were wicked
Let me tell you why I was in Jerusalem. After¹⁷ .God and what other people think is right
I had been in other places for several years, I returned there to bring some money to help
my fellow Jews who were poor. While I was there, I also offered sacrifices in the temple
Some Jews from Asia saw me offering those sacrifices in the temple¹⁸ .courtyard
courtyard. I had completed the ritual that allowed me to worship God there. There was no
No, it was those Jews from the¹⁹ .crowd with me. I was not causing anyone to riot
province of Asia who caused the people to riot! And they should really be here in your
But if they do not²⁰ .court to accuse me if they think that I have done anything wrong
want to do that, these Jewish men who are here should tell you what they think I did that
They might say that I did this one²¹ .was wrong when I defended myself in their council
thing wrong: When I was in their council, I shouted, ‘You are judging me today because I
”’.believe that God will cause all the people who have died to live again

Now Felix already knew much about the group people called the Way, and so he²²
stopped the trial. He said to the Jewish leaders, “Later, when Commander Lysias comes

Then Governor Felix told the officer who was guarding²³ ".here, I will decide this case Paul to take Paul back to the prison. But he told him to allow Paul to do things freely in the prison. He also said that if Paul's friends came to visit him, the officer should allow them to .help Paul in any way that they wanted to

But several days later Felix came back with his wife Drusilla. She was a Jew. Felix²⁴ listened to what Paul said about trusting **and Drusilla** called for Paul to speak with him. He Paul talked about what God wants people to do in order to please²⁵ .in Jesus the Messiah him. Paul also explained how people should control how they act. Paul said that there would be a time when God would judge all people. Felix became afraid after hearing those things. So he said to Paul, "That is all I want to hear now. But when I have time, I will ask .Felix was also hoping that Paul would give him some money²⁶ ".you to come to me again **but he** ,So he sent for Paul to come to him many times. Paul talked with Felix every time **.did not give him any money, so Felix did not tell his soldiers to release Paul from prison**

This went on for about two years. Then a man named Porcius Festus replaced Felix²⁷ .as the governor. And since Felix wanted to please the Jewish leaders, he left Paul in prison

Then Festus began to rule as the governor of the province of Judea. Three¹ **25**
In Jerusalem, the chief² .days later, he left the city of Caesarea and traveled to Jerusalem priests and some important Jewish leaders insisted urgently to Festus that Paul had done They asked Festus to help them pursue their case against³ .things that were very wrong Paul. They asked him to order his soldiers to bring Paul to trial in Jerusalem. But they were But Festus replied, "Paul is in⁴ .really planning to attack him on the road and kill him So," he⁵ ".prison in Caesarea. Now I myself plan to travel back to Caesarea very soon said, "those of you who are able should travel there with me. If you want to accuse Paul of ".doing anything wrong, you can accuse him there

Festus remained in Jerusalem with the Jewish leaders for about another week. Then⁶ he returned to the city of Caesarea. The next day, Festus commanded his soldiers to bring So the soldiers brought Paul to⁷ .Paul to the hall where he was sitting in the judge's seat Festus. The Jewish leaders who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him. They .accused him of doing many bad things. But they were not able to prove any of them Then Paul spoke for himself. He said, "I have not broken any of the Jewish laws. I have⁸ not broken any of the rules about who can enter the temple. I have not broken any of the ,Festus, however, wanted to please the Jewish leaders. So he asked Paul⁹ ".Roman laws

.Some ancient manuscripts include the end of verse 6, verse 7, and the first part of verse 8 .3

But Paul¹⁰ ”?Are you willing to travel to Jerusalem so that I can judge your case there“
replied, “No, right now you are judging me, and you represent the Emperor. This is the
right place for my trial. I have done nothing wrong to the Jewish people. You know that is
If I deserved to die for something I had done wrong, I would accept dying as¹¹ .the truth
my punishment. They are accusing me of many things, but I do not deserve to die for
anything I have done. So no one can condemn me just to satisfy them. I claim my right to
.Festus conferred with the officials who advised him¹² ”.have Caesar himself judge me
Then he told Paul, “You have asked Caesar to try your case, and so I will send you to
”.Caesar

Then, after several days, King Herod Agrippa arrived at Caesarea. His sister Bernice¹³
.came with him. They were making a formal visit to welcome Festus as the new governor
they had time to ,Since King Agrippa and Bernice stayed in Caesarea for several days¹⁴
,At one point Festus told Agrippa about Paul. He said .speak with Festus about many things
When I went to Jerusalem, the chief¹⁵ .There is a man here whom Felix kept in prison“
priests and the Jewish elders accused him of many things. They asked me to condemn him
But I told them that when people accuse someone of a serious crime, we¹⁶ .to death
Romans do not condemn that person just to satisfy the accusers. Instead, we allow him to
.meet in person with his accusers and defend himself against what they say about him
So when those Jews came here to Caesarea, I did not delay the trial at all. The day after¹⁷
I¹⁸ .they arrived, I convened the court and ordered the guards to bring in the prisoner
thought that the Jewish leaders would accuse Paul of doing many wrong things. But when
,Instead¹⁹ .they made their accusations against him, none of the accusations were serious
they argued with him about what Jews should believe. They also argued about a man whose
I did not know how I could²⁰ .name was Jesus. He had died, but Paul said he was alive
investigate this case from Caesarea. So I asked Paul, ‘Are you willing to go to Jerusalem so
But Paul asked to stay in Caesarea until²¹ ’?that I can judge you there about these things
the emperor himself could judge his case. So I ordered my soldiers to keep him under guard
Then Agrippa said to Festus, “Personally I would like²² ”.until I could send him to Caesar
to hear what this man has to say.” Festus answered, “I will arrange for you to hear him
”.tomorrow

So the next day Agrippa and Bernice entered the hall of judgment. The people there²³
showed them much honor. Some Roman commanders and some of the important people of
After²⁴ .Caesarea came with them. Then Festus commanded the guards to bring Paul in
Paul entered, Festus said, “King Agrippa and all the rest of you who are here with us, you
see this man! Many leaders of the Jews, both in Jerusalem and here, have protested to me

But I found that²⁵ .about him. They have demanded that I put him to death immediately he had done nothing to deserve being killed. Even so, he has asked Caesar to judge his
But I do not know exactly what to write to²⁶ .case. So I have decided to send him to Rome the emperor about him. That is why I have brought him here to speak to all of you, and especially to you, King Agrippa. You can question him. Then I will know what to write to
After all, it makes sense that when I send a prisoner to the emperor in²⁷ .the emperor
”.Rome, I should say exactly what wrong things people say he has done

Then Agrippa said to Paul, “You may now speak on your own behalf.” Then¹ **26**
,Paul held out his hand to show that he was about to speak. He defended himself by saying
King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate that I can explain myself to you today. I will²
I³ .tell you why the Jewish leaders are wrong when they say that I have done bad things
am especially fortunate because you know so much about the customs of us Jews and the
”.questions that we argue about. So please listen to me as I tell my whole story

My fellow Jews know how I have lived my life since the time I was a child. They⁴
.know that I have always lived among Jews and that I received my education in Jerusalem
They have known me since I was young. They could tell you, if they were willing, that as⁵
Today I am on⁶ .a Pharisee, I obeyed the most rigid customs of our religion very carefully
trial because I am confidently expecting that God will do what he promised to our
Our 12 Jewish tribes are also waiting confidently for God to do what he⁷ .ancestors
,promised. That is why they continue to honor him and worship him so diligently. And yet
Honored King, these Jewish leaders are saying that I have done wrong because I too am
None of you should find it hard to believe that God would cause⁸ .waiting confidently
.people who had died to live again

But I will admit that I too once found it hard to believe. I was sure that I should do⁹
.everything that I could to stop people from believing in Jesus from the town of Nazareth
.So that is what I did when I lived in Jerusalem. I put many of the believers in prison¹⁰
The chief priests there had given me the power to do that. And when the Sanhedrin was
I continually punished¹¹ .deciding whether to kill believers, I voted in favor of that
believers in Jesus in every synagogue where I could find them. I tried to force them to say
that they did not believe in Jesus. I was so angry with them that I even went to foreign
.cities to find them

Because I told them I wanted to arrest believers in Damascus, the chief priests gave¹²
While I was on my way there, O¹³ .me the power to do that. So I traveled to Damascus

King, I saw a bright light in the sky. Even though it was around noon, this light was even brighter than the sun! It shone all around me and also around those who were traveling with me. We all fell to the ground. Then I heard the voice of someone speaking to me in the¹⁴ Hebrew language. He said, ‘Saul, Saul, you should not be fighting against me. You are harming yourself, like an animal that is kicking against a sharp prod.’ Then I said¹⁵ ‘Please tell me who you are.’ And the person who was speaking to me said, ‘I am Jesus! I want you to tell other people who I am, now that you have seen me. I will show you more about myself later, and I want you to tell others I am sending you both to Jewish people and to non-Jewish people. I will¹⁷ about that too I want you to help them recognize who I really am. I want you¹⁸ protect you from them to help them to live in a way that pleases God. I want them to know that God can make them free from the devil’s influence. I want them to know that God will forgive their sins. I want them to receive the good things that people whom God saves because they believe in me will have forever

.So, King Agrippa, I did what God told me to do when he gave me that vision¹⁹ First, I spoke to the Jews in Damascus. Then I spoke to the Jews in Jerusalem and in the²⁰ countryside of Judea. I also spoke to the non-Jews there. I told them that they should stop sinning and ask God to help them live in the right way. I told them they should do things that showed they had stopped sinning

It is because I preached this message that some Jews seized me when I was in the²¹ temple courtyard and tried to kill me. Because God has been helping me, I have been²² able to keep proclaiming these things to this very day. I have continued to tell people, regardless of their status, exactly what the prophets and Moses said would happen²³ They said that the Messiah would suffer and die. They said that he would be the first person to live again after he had died. They also said that he would tell people how God was able to save them. He would tell this, both to his own Jewish people and to non-Jewish people

,Before Paul could say anything further to defend himself, Festus shouted out loudly²⁴ But²⁵ “!Paul, you are crazy! You have studied too much, and that has made you crazy” Paul answered, “Your Excellency, Governor Festus, I am not insane! On the contrary, what I can assure you that I am not crazy, because King²⁶ !I am saying is true and quite sane Agrippa is familiar with the things I have been talking about so enthusiastically to him. I am very sure that he is aware of all of these things. They all happened very publicly King Agrippa, do you believe what the prophets wrote? I know that you believe those²⁷

.See the note on verse 6 .5

Then Agrippa answered Paul, “I would need to hear much more than this to²⁸ ”.things Paul replied, “Perhaps you need to hear more, or perhaps²⁹ ”!decide to become a Christian you could decide now. But either way, I pray to God that you and all of the others who are Then King Agrippa³⁰ ”!listening to me today will become like me, except for these chains stood up. The governor, Bernice, and all the other important people who had come in with and left the room. After they left, they said to each other, “We should³¹ them also got up Then³² ”.not execute this man or keep him in prison. He has done nothing to deserve that Agrippa said to Festus, “If this man had not appealed to Caesar, you could have released ”.him

,I, Luke .Soon the governor decided it was time to send Paul by ship to Italy¹ **27**

He put Paul and some other prisoners under the control of a military .traveled with him officer whose name was Julius. This man was part of a group of soldiers who reported So Julius put us aboard a ship from the city of Adramyttium in² .directly to the emperor .the province of Asia. This ship was about to sail to various places along the coast of Asia In this way we began our journey by sea. Aristarchus, a man from the city of Thessalonica .The next day we arrived at the city of Sidon³ .in the province of Macedonia, went with us There Julius treated Paul generously. He gave him permission to go see his friends in Sidon .Then the ship sailed away from Sidon⁴ .so they could help him with whatever he needed We went along the coast of Cyprus, which was sheltered from the wind, because the wind After that, we crossed over the sea close to the coasts of Cilicia and⁵ .was against us Pamphylia. The ship arrived at the city of Myra in the province of Lycia. We got off the In Myra, Julius found a ship that had come from the city of Alexandria. It⁶ .ship there The⁷ .would soon sail to Italy. So he arranged for us to go aboard that ship and we left we sailed slowly for many days. It was difficult, but we finally winds were still against us, so reached the city of Cnidus. From there the wind was so strong that the ship could not sail where the ,straight westward. So we sailed along the coast of the island of Crete instead We sailed past Cape Salmone, an area of land sticking out .wind was not blowing strongly The wind was still strong, and it prevented the ship from moving ahead⁸ .into the water fast. So we moved slowly along the coast of Crete. We eventually arrived at a port whose .name was Fair Havens. It was near the city of Lasea

the journey from Caesarea to Fair Havens ,Because the wind was blowing from the west⁹ had taken much more time than the captain and centurion had planned. It had become dangerous to sail because it was late in the year and the stormy season was approaching. So and said to them, “Friends, God has shown me that if¹⁰ ,Paul said to the men on the ship we continue sailing, we will suffer harm and lose many things. A great storm will destroy

But the Roman officer did not believe what¹¹ ".the ship and its cargo and kill all of us Paul said. Instead, he believed the pilot and the captain when they told him the ship would The harbor of Fair Havens did not protect the ships in it very well from winter¹² .be safe storms. So most of the sailors recommended leaving Fair Havens. They hoped that they could reach Phoenix and spend the winter there. Phoenix is a city on the island of Crete with a good harbor. The harbor protects ships well from winds that blow from the Because only a gentle wind was blowing from the south, the¹³ .southwest and northwest ship's crew thought that they could reach Phoenix safely. So they lifted the ship's anchor up After a¹⁴ .out of the sea and sailed the ship close to the coastline of the island of Crete little while, however, a stormy wind blew down from the island. It was the kind of wind This stormy wind blew so strongly against¹⁵ .that the sailors called the Northeast Wind the front of the ship that we could not sail into it. So the sailors decided to sail in the ,However¹⁶ .direction that the wind was blowing. It pushed us across the sea very quickly the sailors were able to sail the ship on the side of a small island that was sheltered from the wind. The name of the island was Cauda. It was very difficult, but the sailors were finally .The sailors hoisted the lifeboat up onto the ship¹⁷ .able to gain control of the lifeboat Then they wound its ropes around the hull of the ship. They became concerned that they .to go more slowly would get stuck in the soggy sand at Syrtis. So they took down the sails But the¹⁸ .This meant they could not steer the ship, and it went wherever the wind blew it wind and the waves continued to toss the ship about roughly. So on the next day, the sailors Then, on the third day of¹⁹ .began to throw overboard the things that the ship was carrying the storm, the sailors threw overboard most of the ship's sails, ropes, and poles. They did But the wind continued to blow very²⁰ .in order to make the ship lighter this deliberately strongly against the ship. The sky was always full of dark clouds so that the sailors could not see the sun or the stars to navigate. After all this we lost hope that we would even .survive

None of us on the ship had eaten for many days. Then one day, Paul stood up in²¹ front of us and said, "Friends, you should have listened to me when I said that we should But now²² .not set sail from Crete. Then, we would not have suffered all this damage please do not be afraid, because none of us will die. The storm will destroy the ship but it I know this because last night an angel came and stood by me. The²³ .will not destroy us The²⁴ .God who protects me and who told me to tell others about him sent this angel angel said to me, 'Paul, do not be afraid. You will reach Rome safely and have the opportunity to testify to the emperor. I want you to know that God is being kind to you. He ,So cheer up²⁵ '.will make sure that everyone who is traveling with you will also survive .my friends, because I believe that God will make this happen exactly as the angel told me ".However, the ship will crash on some island, and we will go ashore there²⁶

Now on the fourteenth night after the storm began, the storm was still blowing the²⁷ ship across the open sea. At about midnight, the sailors thought that the ship was getting So the sailors lowered a rope with a weight on the end to measure how²⁸ .close to land deep the water was. When they pulled the rope up again, they measured it and saw that the water was 40 meters deep. A little later, they measured again and found that the water was the sailors were afraid that the ,Because the water was getting shallower²⁹ .meters deep 30 ship might crash onto some rocks. So they threw four anchors into the water from the end so that they could see where of the ship. Then they prayed that it would soon become light Some of the sailors were planning to escape from the ship. They did³⁰ .the ship was going not want anyone to know what they planned to do. So they pretended that they needed to put the lifeboat in the water so they could use it to lower some anchors from the ship's But Paul said to the Roman officer and the soldiers, "If the sailors do not stay in³¹ .front So the soldiers cut the ropes and the lifeboat dropped³² ".the ship, you will not survive .into the sea

Just before dawn, Paul encouraged everyone on the ship to eat something. He said³³ So³⁴ .For the past 14 days you have been waiting and watching and not eating anything“ now I urge you to eat some food, because you must do this to live. The storm will not kill Then after Paul said that, while everyone³⁵ ”.but if you do not eat, you will die ,any of you was watching, he took some bread and thanked God for it. Then he broke the bread into .Then they all cheered up and ate some food³⁶ .pieces and began to eat some of it When everyone had eaten enough, the³⁸ .Altogether there were 276 of us on the ship³⁷ .sailors made the ship lighter by throwing the rest of the wheat into the water

At dawn we could see land, but the sailors did not know what it was. However, they³⁹ could see a bay that had a beach. They decided to try to run the ship up onto this wide area So they cut the ropes that attached the anchors to the ship⁴⁰ .of sand at the water's edge and let the anchors fall loose into the water. They also untied the ropes that held the rudders .to the ship. They raised a sail to the top of the mast so that the wind would blow into it But the ship sailed into turbulent waters⁴¹ .Then they steered the ship toward the shore and ran onto a sandbank that was just under the waves. The front of the ship stuck there and .could not move. Big waves beat against the back of the ship and it began to break apart

The soldiers wanted to kill all the prisoners so that none of them could swim away⁴² But the Roman officer wanted to save Paul. So he stopped the soldiers from⁴³ .and escape killing the prisoners. Instead, he commanded everyone who could swim to jump off the Then he told the ones who could not swim to⁴⁴ .ship first into the water and swim to shore hold onto something that would float and drift toward the shore. Some held onto wooden

boards that the waves had broken loose from the ship. Some held onto articles from the ship that would float. We did what he said, and in that way all of us made it safely to the shore.

After we had arrived safely on the shore, we learned that we were on an island¹ 28

The people who lived there took care of us very generously. It² .whose name was Malta was cold and it was starting to rain. So they lit a fire and invited all of us to come and warm collecting a bundle of pieces of wood to burn. When **was helping by** Now Paul³ .ourselves he put them on the fire, a poisonous snake came out from the bundle to escape from the Now the people from the island⁴ .heat of the fire. It bit Paul on his hand and clung to it saw the snake dangling from Paul's hand. They said to each other, "This man has probably murdered someone. He has escaped from drowning in the sea. But the goddess Justice is But Paul shook his hand hard⁵ ".punishing him anyway. He will die from this snake bite so that the snake would fall off his hand and back into the fire. The snake fell off and Paul Still, some of the people of the island expected that Paul's body would⁶ .was not hurt at all soon swell up because of the snake bite. Others thought he would suddenly fall down and die. But they waited a long time and did not see either of those things happen to him. So the people decided they had been wrong about who Paul was. They said to one another, "This **because that snake bite would have killed any** ,man is not a murderer. He must be a god **"!human being**

Now the people of the island had built the fire near some fields that belonged to a⁷ man whose name was Publius. He was the chief official on the island. He invited us to At that time⁸ .come and stay in his home. He took very good care of us for three days Publius' father had fever and a stomach illness. He was lying sick in bed. So Paul visited After Paul⁹ .him and prayed for him. Then Paul placed his hands on him and healed him healed Publius' father, the rest of the people on the island who were sick came to him and The island people also brought us gifts and showed in other ways¹⁰ .he healed them too that they greatly respected us. Later on, when we were ready to leave, they brought us food .and other things that we would need on the ship

We stayed on Malta for a total of three months. Then we left on a ship that had spent¹¹ the winter there. The ship was from Alexandria and was going to Italy. On the front of the .ship there were carved images of the twin gods whose names were Castor and Pollux Then we sailed¹³ .When we arrived at the city of Syracuse, we stayed there three days¹² away from Syracuse and arrived at the city of Rhegium in Italy. The next day, the wind .began to blow from the south. So in only two more days, we reached the town of Puteoli In Puteoli we met¹⁴ .**There we got off the ship and went the rest of the way to Rome by land**

some fellow believers who asked us to stay with them for seven days. After that, we
.continued on to Rome

Some fellow believers in Rome had heard that we were coming and they came to¹⁵
meet us. Some of them met us at the place on the Appian Road whose name was the
Market. Others met us at the place whose name was the Three Inns. When Paul saw those
After we arrived in Rome, the authorities there¹⁶ .believers, he thanked God and felt brave
permitted Paul to live in a home rather than in prison. But a soldier was always there to
.guard him

Now after Paul had been in Rome for three days, he sent a message to the Jewish¹⁷
leaders to come and talk with him. And when they arrived, Paul said to them, “My dear
But .kinsmen, I have not opposed our people or spoken against the customs of our ancestors
some Jews in Jerusalem seized me and tried to kill me. A Roman commander rescued me and
sent me as a prisoner to the city of Caesarea so that the Roman authorities could put later
The Roman authorities questioned me and wanted to release me because I¹⁸ .me on trial
But the Jewish leaders¹⁹ .had not done any bad thing for which I should be executed
argued that the Romans should not set me free, So I had to request that the emperor judge
me here in Rome. But I did not do that because I wanted to accuse our leaders of doing
So I asked you to come here so that I could tell you why I am a²⁰ .anything wrong
prisoner. It is because I believe in what we Jews confidently expect that God will do for
Then the Jewish leaders replied, “We have not received any letters from our fellow²¹ ”.us
Jews in Judea about you. And none of our fellow Jews who have come here from Judea
But we would appreciate you telling us what you²² .have said anything bad about you
think about this group that you belong to. Please tell us, because we are aware that in many
”.places people are speaking against it

So they decided that they would come back on another day. On that day, even more²³
people than before came to where Paul was staying to hear Paul speak. Paul explained
many things to them. He talked about how God would rule everyone. He also talked about
how various places in the Scriptures foretold that Jesus would come. Paul talked for that
Paul was able to persuade some²⁴ .entire day with the people who had come to his house
of those Jews that the things he said about Jesus were true. But some others would not
The two groups argued with each other. When they were²⁵ .believe that they were true
about to leave, Paul told them one more thing. He said, “The Holy Spirit spoke the truth to
.your ancestors when he said something through Isaiah the prophet

:He said, ‘Go to the people of Israel and say to them²⁶
.You seem to be listening but you never really understand what God is saying“

”.You seem to be looking but you never really recognize the things that God is doing

.These people do not understand because they have become stubborn²⁷

.It is as if they have become deaf

.It is as if they have closed their eyes

,It is as if they have done this because they do not want to see well

,and they do not want to hear well

.and they do not want to understand well

If they did pay attention to me and understand what I am telling them, they would stop

.sinning and live in the right way again

’.If they did that, I would restore them

Therefore, you should know that God is offering to save the non-Jews, and many of²⁸

When he had said these things, the Jews went away. They] ⁶²⁹ ”.them will accept his offer

[.were having a great dispute among themselves

After that, Paul stayed in Rome for two whole years in a house that he rented. Many³⁰

He³¹ .people came to see him. He received each of them gladly and spoke with them
preached about how God would rule over everyone. He also taught people about the Lord

.Jesus the Messiah. He spoke about these things very openly. No one tried to stop him